

SOCIAL AID
IN OTAGO AND CANTERBURY
UP TO 1885,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
OAMARU AND ASHBURTON

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree

of Master of Arts in History

in the University of Canterbury

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University of Canterbury

2015

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Acknowledgments

This thesis has been a very long journey and I have been assisted by many people.

Firstly, I wish to thank the History Department of Canterbury University for allowing me to embark on it. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the support, advice and encouragement given to me by my supervisor Professor Katie Pickles. I would also mention Dr Jane Buckingham and Professor Philippa Mein-Smith who also provided input.

As this thesis was undertaken extramurally I relied heavily on the assistance and goodwill of librarians both at Canterbury University (especially Dave Clemens) and the Ashburton Public Library.

To my friends, especially Theresa Greygoose, who listened to my airing of thoughts and ideas as I endeavoured to put some order into the mass of information I gathered.

Finally to Dr Gordon Cameron, who not only spent many hours on this project with me but provided a supportive and conducive environment in which to continue on what sometimes was a difficult journey. Words are not enough to say how much your support and determination encouraged and enabled me to keep going.

Preface

This thesis is the result of an almost lifelong interest in social history. Encouraged by my grandmother, I began researching my family tree at the age of 10. This saw me absorb information, not only on my family but also the history of New Zealand (especially Otago) as well as Scotland, England and Ireland.

Given this interest it was perhaps unsurprising that I decided to follow a career in Museums — obtaining a position as curator in the local Museum in Oamaru, where I assisted with the establishment of the North Otago Museum Archive. This position gave me access to a wide variety of records containing numerous interesting, and largely untold, stories.

One of the untold stories that intrigued and impacted on me was the way in which the poor and unfortunate were treated in North Otago. I read the minutes of the Waitaki Charitable Aid Board and what I considered to be sometimes harsh judgements the members made concerning the poor and needy, I compared this information with the more generous reforms of the first social security budget, the birthplace of which occurred in North Otago. After becoming the archivist at the Ashburton Museum in 2011 and discovering that this community had different means of administering aid, I wanted to find out why.

This study therefore combines my interest in social and local history as well a body of knowledge amassed over the years through access to and working with archives from both Ashburton and North Otago.

Abstract

This study examines the way in which charitable aid was administered in Otago and Canterbury leading up to, and slightly beyond, the Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Act of 1885. It utilizes a variety of sources, including archives pertaining to local authorities, organisations that administered charitable aid, and documents created to establish the two provinces under study.

Otago and Canterbury administered charitable aid sometimes in dissimilar ways. This thesis suggests that this was because the two provinces were founded by different countries (Scotland and England respectively) that had developed their own philosophies surrounding the administration of aid.

Following an exploration of the Poor Laws of England and Scotland, the study will describe how Otago and Canterbury were founded and discuss how aid in these two provinces was influenced by the country of origin. After documenting how Otago and Canterbury administered their charitable relief, two towns — Oamaru and Ashburton — will be used to show how these different methods of administering and viewing aid affected people in the community.

The thesis concludes that a Scottish influence of community involvement enabled Oamaru to administer its aid effectively and efficiently. Ashburton, however, was hampered by Canterbury's adherence to civic-led charitable administration, as occurred in England. This saw aid for the majority of the province being administered from Christchurch, with the result for Ashburton that aid was often less effective, impacting on both the community as a whole, but especially the local people who were in need.

Introduction

‘The 1885 Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act was a landmark in our welfare history.’¹ It established a national system of administration for hospitals and charitable relief. Historians and analysts investigating social aid often start their study from 1885 as it is impossible to make general statements about how aid was administered in New Zealand before that date. Between 1852 and 1876 aid was administered largely by the provincial councils. After the abolition of these councils, many districts assumed direct responsibility for the poor and needy amongst their citizens.

This thesis will examine charitable aid in Otago and Canterbury before the pivotal 1885 Act. These neighbouring provinces had much in common: they were settled within a few years of each other, were nominally religious in design, and at the time, the richest in the country.² However, often they had different ideas concerning charitable aid.

Historian Raewyn Dalziel states that New Zealand’s early settlers were strongly parochial: ‘Most migrated to the colony of Wellington, Nelson, Otago or Canterbury, not the colony of New Zealand.’³ Isolation meant that the settlements could almost be in different countries. For example, the ‘Otago settlers were so distant from central government, or indeed from the other settlements, that they were effectively on their own.’⁴ Therefore, by the time the

¹ Margaret Tennant, *Paupers & Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand* (Wellington: Allen & Unwin New Zealand Ltd and Historical Branch, Dept. of Internal Affairs, 1989), 27.

² While Gardner states the fact, (W. J. Gardner, “A Colonial Economy,” in *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, (2nd ed.), ed. Geoffrey W. Rice (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1992), 72.), Lloyd-Pritchard is more precise; for example the total revenue of Canterbury in 1876 was £1,230,666, Otago £1,118,367 with Auckland the next area with a mere £404,437, Muriel F. Lloyd-Pritchard, *An Economic History of New Zealand to 1939* (Auckland: Collins, 1970), 106.

³ Raewyn Dalziel, “The Politics of Settlement,” in *Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. W.H. Oliver with R. Williams (Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1981), 94.

⁴ Michael Bassett, *The State in New Zealand 1840 – 1984 Socialism Without Doctrines?* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1998), 33.

provinces were dissolved, and much of the country's administration became centralised, most had developed their own philosophy and method of doing things.

There were many reasons why different provinces might evolve varying forms of administration, but a major factor in the cases of Otago and Canterbury was that they were founded by different countries — Scotland and England respectively. These two countries had developed their own forms of administration over hundreds of years and had divergent cultural and religious philosophies. A major focus of this study will seek to determine how much the history of charity in Scotland and England coloured the way aid was viewed and administered in Otago and Canterbury.

To fully appreciate these differences, the means of administering charitable aid in England and Scotland needs to be understood. Personal experience and knowledge of what worked, and what did not, likely had a major impact on the way charity was administered here in New Zealand. Old methods were adapted, or new ideas implemented, to ensure that the young colony was far superior in the caring of its citizens than the countries from which they hailed, or so its inhabitants hoped.

There was a strong belief that New Zealand must be 'better' than the countries from which the migrants originated. New Zealand promoted itself as a strong and healthy nation, even if it meant 'weeding' out some of its less useful citizens. Duncan MacGregor, one time Inspector-General of Asylums and Hospitals in New Zealand, spoke disparagingly about the 'hopelessly lazy and diseased',⁵ who once would have been weeded out by natural selection,

⁵ Duncan MacGregor, "The Problem of Poverty," in *The New Zealand Magazine* 1 (Jan. 1876): 317.

were now ‘eating like a cancer into the vitals of society.’⁶ He lamented that society, unlike the animal kingdom, would not permit such ‘waste products’ to struggle and die unaided.⁷

Signs of poverty, which could be seen as symbols of failure, were to be banished from the new landscape — therefore workhouses and Poor Laws were never greatly espoused by the population, nor the majority of leaders. For example, Neil Fleming at a meeting of the North Otago Benevolent Society said the ‘idea of pauperism and poor rates is repugnant to the sympathetic mind, and the best feelings of the community, and ought not to be forced on such a young country.’⁸ While public opinion was often scathing in their comments about how things were done ‘at Home’, eventually many of the old ideas were taken up as there were no better alternatives. Modern historians, such as Tennant however, suggest that regardless of how it was viewed by the settlers, early New Zealand was as harsh and uncaring, perhaps even more so, than the countries they so vigorously maligned.⁹ In reviewing Tennant’s *Paupers and Providers*, Linda Bryder states that in reality New Zealand was a ‘community far from caring [and] much less cohesive ... [, forming communities] not of neighbourly solidarity but of family and neighbourly altercations, petty grievances and tale-telling.’¹⁰

Although the administration of charity is the main focus of this thesis, it will also examine the philosophical background of the provinces of interest. The history of how the settlements were developed, by whom, and why, is an important feature of this study. Time will also be spent discussing the influence of Edward Gibbon Wakefield and his ideas on immigration. Wakefield encouraged immigration to New Zealand as a whole; however it was in Otago and

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ ‘The Hospitals and Charitable Aid Bill,’ *Oamaru Mail*, 10 July 1885, p.2, accessed via <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

⁹ Tennant, (1989), 78.

¹⁰ Linda Bryder, “Paupers and Providers,” in *New Zealand Journal of History* 25 (1991), 70, http://www.nzjh.auckland.ac.nz/docs/1991/NZJH_25_1_08.pdf, accessed 17 March 2014.

Canterbury that his system was refined and his ideas, especially in Canterbury, more closely followed.

To assist in deciding whether the differences of the home countries were imported and to what extent, two communities, Oamaru in North Otago, and Ashburton in Mid Canterbury, will be investigated. Some mention will also be made of how aid was administered immediately after the Central Government took over charitable aid policymaking and provision, and what impact it had on the communities studied.

As this thesis compares two provinces that were founded by different countries,¹¹ questions of ethnicity are necessarily raised and discussed. Terms such as English, Anglican, Presbyterian, Free Church and even, although perhaps to a lesser extent, Scottish are very broad generalisations and do not fully define the ideologies and cultures of the people who established the provinces and administrations under study. While there are differences between them, the provinces, like their founding countries, were neighbours and had a number of similarities, and both examined and sometimes copied the ideas of the other.

Just as there were differences between the provinces, there were also unique characteristics in individual communities. While in 1871 Scots ‘made up about a third of the total population’¹² of Otago and Southland, compared to less than 10% in the rest of the country, Oamaru had a more mixed ethnicity. In 1878 21.6% of the population were Scottish born and a surprising 20.6% English.¹³

¹¹ While some may argue that by the time New Zealand was settled, Scotland and England were a single administrative entity (since the Act of Union 1707, which established Great Britain), at least culturally and ideologically, however, they remained separate. My studies suggest that many settlers and their descendants ‘felt’ they were ‘Scottish’ or ‘English’.

¹² John Wilson, “Scots,” in *Settler and Migrant Peoples of New Zealand*, (Auckland: David Bateman 2006), 245.

¹³ K.C. McDonald, *White Stone Country – the Story of North Otago* (Oamaru: North Otago Centennial Committee, 1962), 139.

Ashburton, too, had a large percentage of Scottish people who, while spread throughout the community, were more numerous in the hillier regions, so much so that the town of Methven for a time was called ‘Canterbury Highland Village.’¹⁴ This concentration may have been because of the natural tendency for migrants to settle in places that resembled where they had come from, enabling them to continue the same farming practices. However, according to Scotter ‘special efforts were made to recruit Scottish shepherds’ by Canterbury farmers.¹⁵ While there are no country of origin figures for Ashburton, in 1878 from a population of 5794, 48% (2772) were Anglican and 24% (1402) Presbyterian.¹⁶

Quantifying religious beliefs is even more difficult; Anglicanism contains a number of branches and Otago’s Free Church community included not only established Presbyterians, but also other faiths. As individuals, each player in their community’s story had different backgrounds and philosophies. Statements attached to such labels as Scottish and Anglican therefore are mostly directed towards the founders — those who influenced the philosophies and methods of administration in the provinces, rather than the province’s population as a whole.

Overall, those who founded Otago were largely Lowlanders from industrialised communities. As Tom Brooking states ‘few came from the bottom levels of ... society’,¹⁷ most were literate and espoused the maxim of hard work and self-sufficiency which was promoted in Otago publicity. They also embraced the ‘notion of rough equality’,¹⁸ with Brooking stating that ‘the most important single contribution [the Scottish settlers made] ... was the lead [they] took in attempting to share out wealth and power in roughly equal proportions. Scots, more

¹⁴ Ray McCausland, *Unto the Hills* (Methven and Districts Centennial Committee, 1979), 11.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ W. H. Scotter, *Ashburton – A History with Records of Town and Country* (Ashburton: Ashburton Borough and County Council, 1972), 428.

¹⁷ Tom Brooking, “Sharing out the Haggis: the Special Scottish Contribution to New Zealand,” in *The Heather and the Fern: Scottish Migration and New Zealand Settlement*, eds. Tom Brooking and Jenni Coleman, (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2003), 50.

¹⁸ Ibid.

than other British settlers, tried to find a balance between the private accumulation of wealth and the achievement of social equity.’¹⁹ According to John Wilson ‘they prospered ahead of other migrant groups and were well represented among the very successful.’²⁰

The English settlers of Canterbury were a transplanted society and were a more heterogeneous mixture in terms of wealth, education, skill levels, rural and urban as well as religion. ‘It is difficult to exactly define English culture or the characteristics of Englishness since there was an extraordinary range [...] ... different cultures ... different regions and classes’.²¹ Constantine adds that defining Englishness on the basis of Anglicism ‘is a little rocky’²² and concluded there was ‘not a singular English identity but several.’²³ What was common to many Canterbury settlers, however, was an acceptance of, or at least familiarity with, the class system which both Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the majority of Canterbury Association leaders wished to export. These leaders were upper middle class, on the ground, but those who helped formulate the settlement that remained in England were upper class and included nobility and members of the Anglican Church hierarchy.

This thesis argues that administration of charitable aid in Otago and Canterbury articulated the national philosophies of Scotland and England. ‘Very few Scottish migrants wanted to return to any kind of feudal order ... most seemed intent on escaping the gloom of the Celtic twilight for the bright dawn of a new start in a new country.’²⁴ Those that established Otago promised hard work would enable people to make a new life, yet should they encounter difficulties they could receive assistance. This assistance was provided by dedicated groups

¹⁹ Tom Brooking, (2003), 64.

²⁰ Wilson, 251.

²¹ Terry Hearn, “English,” in *Settler and Migrant Peoples of New Zealand*, (Auckland: David Bateman 2006), 127.

²² Stephen Constantine, “In search of the English and Englishness,” in *Far from ‘Home’ the English in New Zealand*, eds. Lyndon Fraser and Angela McCarthy, (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2012), 31.

²³ Constantine, 38.

²⁴ Brooking, (2003), 50.

composed of members of their community. This was the case in Oamaru (even with a sizeable English population).

Conversely, England exported the same class structure that hindered people from improving their situation at Home. In order for the middle classes to succeed and retain their position, they required the majority to work for them and to look to the establishment for assistance. In England and Canterbury, aid was managed by local authorities. Fairburn quotes Steven Eldred Grigg as saying that the land owner 'drove small holders into a sort of peonage since the gentry's monopoly over land left them insufficient to support themselves ... the gentry bonded wage earners to themselves through their control over charitable assistance.'²⁵

Methodology

This thesis uses a variety of sources in order to investigate and put forward its argument. Sources that were consulted were published books, unpublished manuscripts and archival documents including newspapers.

Published sources

Information pertaining to the administration of aid overseas was obtained through extensive reading of published material. This included both recent and older material; all were useful as the Poor Laws themselves and their history have not changed. What has changed, and was of interest in its own right, was the way in which the same material was analysed and used to put forward very different theories and arguments pertaining to the provision of welfare. As

²⁵ Miles Fairburn, *The Ideal Society and its Enemies — the Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850 – 1900* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1989), 83.

far as this thesis is concerned, the most important material was that concerning the views of Thomas Chalmers, especially *The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns*, which formed the basic principles of how aid was to be provided and viewed in the Otago settlement.²⁶

Highlighting that this thesis adds to a neglected area in our nation's history, the number of general histories of New Zealand that had any real reference to charitable aid before 1885 is incredibly scant. Apart from Raewyn Dalziel's "The Politics of Settlement" in the *Oxford History of New Zealand*,²⁷ the books most useful to this study concerned the economy of early New Zealand, such as Lloyd-Pritchard's *An Economic History of New Zealand to 1939*.²⁸ There were a number of publications that provided information pertaining to the settlement of New Zealand, and the provinces under study in particular. Philip Temple's *A Sort of Conscience — The Wakefields* was invaluable in obtaining an insight into the man and the family that made such an impact on the founding of this country.²⁹

The three volume *History of Canterbury*, is a comprehensive account as to how the province was founded.³⁰ (One the series editors, W H Scotter, also wrote the only comprehensive history of Ashburton.³¹) Concerning the founder of Canterbury, Godley, *Remembering Godley*³² was invaluable, as was *A Selection from the Writings and Speeches of John Robert Godley*.³³

²⁶ Thomas Chalmers, *The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns* (Glasgow: Chalmers and Collins, 1821). 225, from books.google.com accessed November 2, 2012.

²⁷ Dalziel, (1981).

²⁸ Lloyd-Pritchard, (1970).

²⁹ Philip Temple, *A Sort of Conscience – The Wakefields* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002).

³⁰ Published by the Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee, 1972.

³¹ Scotter, (1972).

³² *Remembering Godley*, ed. Mark Stocker, (Christchurch, New Zealand: Hazard Press, 2001).

³³ John Godley, *A Selection from the Writings and Speeches of John Robert Godley*, collected and ed. James Edward Fitzgerald, (Christchurch: Press Office, 1863).

As the subject of this thesis is exploring rarely travelled ground, published material concerning charity was difficult to come across. Although *Hospital on the Avon: the History of the Christchurch Hospital 1862–1962*³⁴ and *The Christchurch Hospital Historical and Descriptive Sketch*,³⁵ concentrated on the Hospital, charitable aid was featured and they also provided insights into how the poor and needy were seen in early Canterbury.

Early Otago is well covered by publications. Whether this is due to more value placed on history by Otago writers, over inflated pride in their province or perhaps a reduced focus on New Zealand history at tertiary level in Canterbury is unclear. McLintock's *The History of Otago — the Origins and Growth of a Wakefield Class Settlement*,³⁶ is still a comprehensive and essential resource, although Olssen's *A History of Otago*³⁷ provides a fresh reworking of the same story along with new points of view. Local historian K C McDonald's books on North Otago are, like McLintock, indispensable resources.³⁸

One of the main arguments of this thesis is that because of their different countries of origin, Otago and Canterbury had different views on, among other things, charitable aid. In order to define these differences, works on ethnicity were read. *The Heather and the Fern Scottish Migration and New Zealand Settlement*³⁹ and *Far from 'Home' the English in New Zealand*⁴⁰ were very useful, not only for the information they contained, but also they served as a

³⁴ F. O. Bennett, *Hospital on the Avon: the History of the Christchurch Hospital 1862 – 1962* (Christchurch, North Canterbury Hospital Board, 1962).

³⁵ P Clennell Fenwick, *The Christchurch Hospital Historical and Descriptive Sketch* (Christchurch: Andrews, Baty, 1926).

³⁶ A. H. McLintock, *The History of Otago – the Origins and Growth of a Wakefield Class Settlement* (Dunedin: Otago Centennial Historical Publications, 1949).

³⁷ Erik Olssen, *A History of Otago* (Dunedin: John McIndoe 1984).

³⁸ K.C. McDonald, *White Stone Country – the Story of North Otago* (Oamaru: North Otago Centennial Committee, 1962), *Oamaru 1878, a Colonial Town*, ed. Gavin McLean (Oamaru: Publication Group of the Waitaki District Council, 2006) and *History of North Otago* (Oamaru: North Otago Centennial Committee, 1940).

³⁹ *The Heather and the Fern: Scottish Migration and New Zealand Settlement*, eds. Tom Brooking and Jenni Coleman, (Dunedin: University of Otago Press, 2003).

⁴⁰ *Far from 'Home': the English in New Zealand*, eds. Lyndon Fraser and Angela McCarthy, (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2012).

‘check’. Growing up in Otago and having forebears from both countries it is easy to fall prey to parochialism and stereotyping.

Naturally, books on charitable aid and the later welfare state were researched. The seminal *Paupers & Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand*⁴¹ and *The Fabric of Welfare: Voluntary Organisations, Government and Welfare in New Zealand, 1840 –2005*,⁴² both by Tennant were vital reading. Her information and discussions into the topic were extremely important for an understanding of the topic and how this study relates and adds to the wider understanding of the administration of aid in early New Zealand. While Tennant is unquestionably the authority on this topic, David Thomson⁴³ and Bronwyn Labrum⁴⁴ also influence the study of welfare and charitable aid — especially from the view point of the individual that received aid, which is an important aspect of this thesis.

Unpublished sources

Given that this thesis focussed on local communities and individuals, in a time period often overlooked by welfare historians, the use of unpublished material, in the form of manuscripts and archival documents, was extremely important.

Manuscripts and unpublished works include Tennant’s doctoral thesis *Indigence and Charitable Aid in New Zealand 1885–1920*,⁴⁵ which gave rise to *Paupers and Providers*. Useful theses concerning the formation of Canterbury included Mary Margaret Hickey’s *The*

⁴¹ Margaret Tennant, (1989).

⁴² Margaret Tennant, *The Fabric of Welfare: Voluntary Organisations, Government and Welfare in New Zealand, 1840-2005* (Wellington, N.Z.: Bridget Williams Books, 2007).

⁴³ David Thomson, *A World Without Welfare — New Zealand’s Colonial Experiment* (Auckland: Auckland University Library, 1998).

⁴⁴ Bronwyn Labrum, “The Changing Meanings and Practices of Welfare 1840s-1990s,” in *New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Giselle Byrnes (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁴⁵ Margaret Tennant, “Indigence and Charitable Aid in New Zealand 1885-1920”. (Ph.D. Thesis, Massey University, 1981).

*Godley Period of the Canterbury settlement.*⁴⁶ Although little published material is extant concerning charity in Canterbury, Myrtle Roper's *The History of the Social Services of the Anglican Church in Canterbury*⁴⁷ is a comprehensive and well researched body of work which provided a great deal of information. Roper's work relied on church minutes as well journals and newsletters and using this thesis reduced the time required in attempting to access the material — no easy task given the number of institutions closed in Canterbury after the earthquakes.

Mention must also be made of the thesis of Steven Grainger, *Church, Society and Imperial Mentalities, c. 1700–1870: The Political and Ideological Context of the Canterbury Association.*⁴⁸ Grainger wrote two insightful articles concerning Godley in *Remembering Godley*,⁴⁹ which used some of the material included in his thesis which, inter alia, explored the character of Godley — who like Thomas Chalmers in Otago, developed and enforced the theories surrounding aid and its administration in Canterbury.

Other unpublished material of importance consulted was Winifred Norris' *The North Canterbury Hospital Board: Fragments of History: Hospitals: Tuberculosis and Benevolent Institutions and Miscellaneous*,⁵⁰ which included references to the Ashburton and North Canterbury Charitable Board. Ashburton doctor Maurice Otley's *The History of Medicine in the Ashburton County New Zealand 1855–1955*⁵¹ is a significant work which also covered

⁴⁶ Mary Margaret Hickey, "The Godley Period of the Canterbury settlement." (M. A. Thesis Canterbury University College, 1915).

⁴⁷ Myrtle Roper, "The History of the Social Services of the Anglican Church in Canterbury." (M.A and honours, Canterbury University College, Christchurch, 1943).

⁴⁸ Steven Grainger, "Church, Society and Imperial Mentalities, c. 1700 – 1870: The Political and Ideological Context of the Canterbury Association." (D.Phil. thesis, University of Sussex, 1997).

⁴⁹ Steven Grainger, 'Who was Godley?' in *Remembering Godley*, ed. Mark Stocker, (Christchurch, New Zealand: Hazard Press, 2001) and "Godley and Canterbury: A Success Story?"

⁵⁰ Winifred Norris, *The North Canterbury Hospital Board: Fragments of History: Hospitals: Tuberculosis and Benevolent Institutions and Miscellaneous*, 1942, <http://christchurchcitylibraries.com/Heritage/Digitised/Norris-1942/>

⁵¹ Maurice Otley, *The History of Medicine in the Ashburton County New Zealand 1855 – 1955* (Christchurch: Maurice Otley, 1978).

other topics of the area's history. It is presented in a condensed form in one volume as well as an expanded series of six volumes which also comprise his notes and numerous letters.

Archives

While the majority of manuscripts were accessible via libraries, and sometimes digitally, the most significant material were those unique documents only held in archives. The main Archives visited in the quest for information were Archives New Zealand (Christchurch and Wellington), Hocken Library (Dunedin), North Otago Museum (Oamaru) as well as the records that formed part of the Collection of the Ashburton District Council (presently being transferred to the Ashburton Museum).

Archives New Zealand Wellington has material pertaining to the Canterbury Association, including correspondence between their secretary and government officials as well as information provided to prospective migrants. These documents, although difficult to locate gave exact information as to what they expected of the immigrants. While access to Archives New Zealand in Christchurch was made difficult because of their closure and then reduced hours due to the earthquakes I was able to examine the records of the United Charitable Aid Board constituted after the 1885 Act came into being. Although sizeable in quantity, it was difficult to glean much useful information about Ashburton from these records. A major difference between Oamaru and Ashburton was that Ashburton's aid was administered from Christchurch; therefore these records cover the whole area, rarely specifically mentioning Ashburton. In addition, the records only begin in 1885 which is the end point of this thesis.

Hocken library in Dunedin has material pertaining to the foundation of Otago as a settlement, including *The Scheme of the Colony of the Free Church at Otago*,⁵² which was information provided to the potential migrants about Otago and how it was to be managed. Complementary to this is the *Otago Journal*⁵³ which, although printed in Edinburgh, was largely encouraging the right types to join their compatriots in the new colony. Hocken also holds the *New Zealand Magazine*⁵⁴ of 1876 which ran as a serial, Dr MacGregor's *The Problem of Poverty*, which provided interesting, if not disturbing, insights into how the most influential individual in the realm of charity viewed the needy.

One of the significant features of this study is the use of material that has not been accessed before by historians. There is a wealth of important and fascinating material in local archives which is largely overlooked by researchers. If nothing else, this study should prompt other writers to investigate what lies in Archives such as those in Oamaru and Ashburton.

The North Otago Museum Archive, now part of the Waitaki Libraries, has been actively collecting archives since 1987. Archives consulted for this study were the Oamaru Borough and Waitaki County Council records, which included minutes, correspondence and financial material. Also used were items from the Waitaki Hospital Board collection: minutes and ledgers created by the North Otago Benevolent Society, and (after 1885) the Waitaki Hospital and Charitable Aid Board. Although outside the scope of study, admission registers for the Old People's Home (later Victoria Home) and the Public Hospital were also consulted to gain an insight into the types of people who sought aid.

⁵² Otago Association, *Scheme of the colony of the Free Church at Otago* (Glasgow: Scottish Guardian Office, 1845).

⁵³ Association for Promoting the Settlement of Otago, *Otago Journal* (Edinburgh: The Association for Promoting the Settlement of Otago).

⁵⁴ *New Zealand Magazine*, (Dunedin: Otago Daily Times).

The Ashburton Museum has a smaller collection of material due to cramped conditions and, for a time, the absence of trained staff. However the construction of a new building has seen significant collections beginning to arrive. One such collection has been that of the Ashburton District Council — which was formed in 1989 by the amalgamation of the Ashburton Borough and Council, as well as local town boards and road boards. These road boards, the first of which was created in 1864, worked alongside the County Council (which was established in 1876) and administered their own areas, including the provision of aid. The County Council acted as the regional authority and took on the countywide administration — such as interfacing with such organisations as the Provincial Council (although often the Road Boards also acted on their own behalf with such groups). As the road boards contributed to the United Ashburton and North Canterbury Board (via the County Council) they received memos and annual reports which are sometimes difficult to locate in the archives of the Board itself. Material consulted in this Archive pertained to the various local authorities and included minutes, correspondence, files and financial reports. A significant difference between Oamaru and Ashburton was that while Oamaru had a hospital board, in contrast, the Ashburton County administered the Hospital. The unindexed minutes for Ashburton, therefore, had to be read closely to find references to the Hospital and aid amongst entries concerning roads, bridges and other matters. These Ashburton-based records are the only resources that give some indication as to how the local people felt about the way aid was administered. They also mention local people who required aid, who otherwise would be lost in a sea of names as part of the catchment of the united board.

Newspapers

Newspapers were a very important resource for this study. They were consulted in two formats — original and digital — as part of the National Libraries ‘Papers Past’ website.

While both Oamaru and Ashburton once had two newspapers, only the later *Ashburton Guardian* is readily available (via an index and publication on the ‘Papers Past’ website); the originals are shared between a number of institutions and locations. Oamaru’s *North Otago Times* and *Oamaru Mail* are both indexed and available both as hard copy and on ‘Papers Past’, but the *North Otago Times* was chosen as it was the earlier.

While using primary sources such as newspapers and archives enriches the depth of one’s research there are a number of issues that may arise. Firstly, comparable material is sometimes unavailable. In Oamaru’s case there are North Otago Benevolent Society minutes and the local newspapers — including the *North Otago Times* led by William Jukes Steward — were very vocal in discussing, even championing, charitable causes. Although Steward also edited the *Ashburton Guardian* there is little mention of charitable aid in Ashburton newspapers and little reference to it in County minutes.

Second is the bias that may occur when consulting material unfiltered by ‘political correctness’, or even laws surrounding liable and privacy. Local body material can sometimes be rather inflammatory or accusative (as the minutes were not considered public records when they were created). Newspapers in the time under study were largely independent and often led by their respective editor’s personal opinions, and naturally they published letters from members of the public. This may give historians a coloured view, especially if that is the only resource available.

Third, the illiterate, poor, women and children — essentially those that could be recipients of aid — have no voice in official documents. This is an area where social historians could enlist the assistance of family historians to obtain a more complete picture.

Significance

This thesis is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it deals with a period before the 1885 Act — often ignored by historians. Before the centralisation of administration, each province acted independently so is difficult to define in any detail. Most studies focus on the progression of aid administration, with the 1885 Act as a starting point towards the study of other important pieces of legislation (such as the Old Aged Pensions Act 1898 and of course the Social Security Act of 1935) and as a means to examine, explain and understand the current theories of welfare administration in New Zealand today. This study instead concentrates on a specific period and does not use the information gained to foreshadow future events. Therefore, it adds important information to the wider knowledge and understanding of charitable aid in New Zealand.

This study also endeavours to give a voice to the invisible people who are sometimes reduced to statistics in similar studies. Case studies and the use of archival material enables closer investigation as to how aid was administered at a community level and how the people who received aid were helped. The study as a whole endeavours to deal in specifics than generalities in relating the history of charitable aid.

Apart from examining the history of charitable aid in New Zealand from a rarely explored place in history it also looks at ethnicity. Informally, Otago and Canterbury are recognized as different types of communities, imbued with distinct national flavours (Scottish and English respectively). This study takes one aspect common to each of the province's history and seeks to determine whether they 'ran true' to their national and religious backgrounds.

Chapter Outline

Chapter one looks at the development of laws and regulations to manage the poor, which often was more of a concern to authorities than the provision of relief. It introduces the central themes of how Scotland and England differed from each other in their philosophies surrounding and methods of administering aid. It also discusses the changing perception of who was deserving of aid and who was not.

Chapter two transports the story to New Zealand. It looks at some of the issues surrounding the settling of the country as a whole and how it was seen by England before introducing the ideas behind Edward Gibbon Wakefield and his system as promoted by his New Zealand Company. It then spends some time focusing on the establishment of Canterbury and Otago. It looks at the history of the Otago and Canterbury Associations and how they were formed. This chapter also continues the main theme by comparing the philosophies of the two Associations as well the major architects of the settlements – particularly concerning aid—with a focus on Robert Godley in Canterbury, and Free Church minister Thomas Chalmers in Otago.

Chapter Three takes the information obtained in the first two chapters and seeks to answer the question was charitable aid administered differently in Otago and Canterbury due to their different countries of origin? To make the investigation more specific it uses the towns of Oamaru and Ashburton as cases studies to see how charitable aid was administered there. Investigating the stories of these towns also allows examination of some of the issues faced by communities and individuals before the 1885 act and how poverty and need were viewed and relieved. The thesis concludes that country of origin did have a strong impact on how aid was administered in the two provinces.

Chapter One:

Creating the Legacy of Care; The Poor Laws

This thesis deals with how the poor and needy were cared for, or managed, in mid-19th century New Zealand. However, as it suggests that Otago and Canterbury differed in how it fulfilled these duties because they were established by different countries, the development of and philosophies surrounding poor relief in Scotland and England need to be discussed. This chapter, therefore, chronicles how the two founding countries established their own methods of relief administration — which saw it grow from a religious obligation to a duty of government.

Deuteronomy 15:11 of the Bible says there will always be poor people. Fortunately, for the poor, widowed and orphaned, most religious texts encourage righteous people to support the unfortunate and needy. Scotland and England certainly followed these spiritual and moral conventions. Originally, their poor relied on the goodwill of friends, neighbours, charitable folk and particularly religious administrators in order to survive. This aid was both minimal and erratic.

‘Charity’ was very much focussed on the giver rather than the recipient. The giving of alms was a religious duty or activity; it mattered little whether the people receiving aid deserved or needed it or not. As Himmelfarb points out; ‘those who were blessed not with poverty but with riches, had the sacred duty of charity — the obligation to sustain the holy poor (those who ‘embraced poverty as a sacred vow’⁵⁵) and relieve the misery of the unholy’ (the

⁵⁵ Gertrude Himmelfarb, *The Idea of Poverty: England in the Early Industrial Age* (London: Faber, 1984), 3.

majority).⁵⁶

As a means to establish a more organised and centralized manner of administering aid, and possibly to increase their power, these countries' governments began to pass legislation concerning the poor. These statutes and acts culminated in what is collectively called the Poor Laws, which historian W. K. Jordan states were designed as the 'ultimate resource',⁵⁷ to be invoked only in dire circumstances. They were not intended to replace philanthropic giving. This ideology, first legislated five centuries before New Zealand was colonised, formed the basis of the new colony's legislation.

While the name implies these laws were to help the poor, most only regulated those in need, suppressing and punishing beggars, and dividing 'poor' into two main groups — deserving and undeserving. In general, relief was reserved for the deserving poor: young, elderly or infirm — those who were unable to support themselves through work, or indeed even begging. 'The able-bodied were ... excluded from the benefits of the poor fund and [were forced to become part] of the wandering poor.'⁵⁸ Relief was considered a supplement to whatever other support one could obtain, hence the importance of laws providing licenses to beg and settlement papers. It was considered that, if given the opportunity, deserving people would refuse aid.

Those who were considered undeserving were those who refused to work, or were considered to have bought their circumstances upon themselves. Lindsay states that draft acts in Scotland concerning the undeserving poor advocated such punishments as whipping and

⁵⁶ Gertrude Himmelfarb, (1984), 4.

⁵⁷ David Owen, *English Philanthropy 1660 – 1960* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1965), 2.

⁵⁸ Audrey Paterson, "The Poor Law in 19th century Scotland, " in *The New Poor Law in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Derek Fraser (London: MacMillan, 1976), 173.

burning.⁵⁹ Severe admonishment for illegitimate births caused children to be abandoned, even murdered.⁶⁰ England passed a Bastardy Act in 1575 where parents were punished and sometimes sent to prison,⁶¹ however the 1601 Poor Law Act saw the instigation of Bastardy Bonds, whereupon naming a father the unmarried mother would ensure parish relief for her and her child. This idea was imported to New Zealand, with deserted wives denied relief unless they provided information regarding the whereabouts of their husband, or parents declined admission to old people's homes if they refused to charge their children for support.

Although New Zealand did not import a Poor Law (at least in name), the methods of administration in England, as well as Scotland, were examined and adapted to suit the new country. While many aspects of charitable aid were direct transplants, especially after the 1885 Act, it would be incorrect to state that New Zealand slavishly adopted the law of their founding countries. It quickly became apparent, however, that while there were more opportunities in New Zealand to be 'successful', or at least self-supporting, the people populating the new land experienced the same unforeseen circumstances such as death and misfortune as 'at Home'. Reluctantly, therefore, New Zealand adopted some of the existing ideas, but determinedly rebranded them to ensure the country's position as better than Home was developed.

The Poor Laws were not static pieces of legislation; both England and Scotland constantly reassessed their laws. England's first step towards their Poor Law was the *Ordinance of Labourers* (1349). Among other things this statute decreed that no one was to give relief to able-bodied beggars. This was a significant move; not only did it define deserving and

⁵⁹ Jean Lindsay, *The Scottish Poor Law: its Operation in the North – East from 1745 – 1845*, (Ilfracombe: Stockwell, 1975) 13.

⁶⁰ Lindsay, 29.

⁶¹ William Edward Tate, *The Parish Chest: A Study of the Records of Parochial Administration in England*, (3rd ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 216.

underserving poor for the first time, but it also directed people to consider who they were giving aid to. This law initiated the mind-set of who was 'worthy' of relief. England's Poor Relief Act of 1601 divided people applying for aid into three groups: the impotent (aged, chronically ill, blind and lunatic — who needed institutional care), able bodied (including children, who were to be given work) and the able bodied who wouldn't work (these needed to be punished and made to work).⁶² For example, in 1663 an act was passed whereby manufacturers could seize all vagabonds and 'employ' them. The act stated that these people could be utilised for a period up to 11 years without payment, although they had to be fed and clothed.⁶³

These two acts came after England's first Poor Law Act, which was passed in 1572. This instructed magistrates to establish the number of 'poor' in their area and tax the inhabitants to provide for them. Later acts, including those in 1597⁶⁴ and the one of 1601 placed the day-to-day administration of the poor on church wardens, although very soon larger towns and cities devolved this duty to civic authorities. These men could tax, or otherwise levy the inhabitants of the parish and put the poor to work. An English Commission into the Poor Law, which took place in 1832, stated that the two main principles of the Act were: 'the refusal of relief to the able-bodied, except on terms which would prove the recipients to be so utterly without the means or hope of ... independent support as to make them willing to accept any conditions so as to avoid the real risk of starvation and ... ; fixing the terms and conditions of relief so that the position of the relieved person would always be below that of the poorest independent worker.'⁶⁵

⁶² Derek Fraser, *Evolution of the British Welfare State* (1973, reprint, London: MacMillan, 1975), 30.

⁶³ Lindsay, 13.

⁶⁴ "Act for the Relief of the Poor".

⁶⁵ Elizabeth Hanson, *The Politics of Social Security. The 1938 Act and Some Later Developments* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1980), 12.

Sir George Nicholls, architect of the Irish Poor Law,⁶⁶ attested that in both Ireland and England the object of the Poor Law was the same — ‘to relieve the community from the demoralisation and danger consequent on the prevalence of extensive and unmitigated destitution.’⁶⁷ Charity was not the main objective.⁶⁸ Self-preservation and self-interest of the providers directed the manner and amount of aid provided. Community funded ragged schools and refuges could be just as much about ‘decent folk’ wanting to preserve the propriety and safety of their community and ensure a good supply of labourers, tradesmen and domestic servants, as it was a genuine concern for the less fortunate. Abram de Swaan believed that welfare grew out of ‘people’s need to protect themselves against the external effects ...of other people’s misfortune.’⁶⁹ For example, in New Zealand, female refuges were established to give shelter to unemployed women as much to ensure they did not turn to prostitution as it was to provide a venue where people seeking domestics could visit.

In 1834 a Commission was formed to establish a New English Poor Law. Contrasting the sentiments of the older act, one of the comments of the Commission was that ‘to refuse relief is repugnant to the common sentiments of mankind.’⁷⁰ Modern readers may view this statement as a truism, but reflecting upon the acts and laws that provided for the needy and poor before the new act, it was quite a watershed, for now the recipients of the relief were given a presence, and even rights to charity.

This new way of viewing social responsibility came during the time of the Evangelical Revival, where ‘practical Christians’ undertook to do good works as a physical way of

⁶⁶ Nicholls stated ‘that the Irish Poor Law was in its origin no more than a branch of the English Poor Law [although] the Irish Poor Law had over time developed its own character’. Virginia Crossman, *Politics, Pauperism and Power in Late Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 6.

⁶⁷ Bernard Harris, *The Origins of the British Welfare State – Social Welfare in England and Wales 1800 – 1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 41.

⁶⁸ George Nicholls, *A History of the Irish Poor Law in Connexion with the Condition of the People* (1856. Reprint, New York: A M Kelley, 1967), vi.

⁶⁹ Quoted in Harris, 16.

⁷⁰ Harris, 46.

expressing their religious beliefs. It was a personal response to God, showing the same compassion to their fellow man as God showed them. These 'good works' saw many people or groups go out into their community to reform or improve the conditions of the poor and needy that lived in their neighbourhood.

Early charity efforts overseas, as well as New Zealand, were very general. Later, groups became more specific, focussing on particular areas or types: children, factory workers and prostitutes were favoured causes,⁷¹ as were specific diseases. The recipients of aid became almost overwhelmed with different groups wanting to provide them with assistance.

However they also ran the risk of becoming too popular. Giving aid was almost a fashionable activity prone to the same fad-like following, with some causes becoming abandoned for new charities. Historian David Owen states that this revival 'coincided with the economic revolution and population explosion'.⁷² The age was 'exhibiting a new sensitiveness to human need — this collective charity was largely middle class and puritan' — sectors of society that were finding their political voice.⁷³ While this rekindling of piety resulted in aid being given to the poor, it was also an expression of the competition between churches. A number of new religious groups such as the Salvation Army and Methodists became established during this time. These were often seen as a threat to the older movements. To some extent, church based charity was not so much about helping the poor, but a means to gain converts or retain existing members. As the number of religious groups grew, philanthropic work became competitive, seeing who could 'save' the most souls. This competition saw a number of different mission stations being established in New Zealand by different denominations. This competitive nature, coupled with social and nationalistic

⁷¹ Children and fallen women were 'popular' causes with the public, whereas the New Zealand government always funded mental health as it was considered 'unlikely to attract many benefactors'. Tennant (1989), 4.

⁷² Owen, 3.

⁷³ Owen, 11.

loyalties, only made the uneasiness between different groups, such as Anglicans and Presbyterians, more pronounced in New Zealand. In Otago and Canterbury, providing aid was used as a means to strengthen the ‘established’ church’s position. For example, Canterbury’s Anglican Church worked vigorously in the realm of social aid to deflect the challenge from Methodists, who had been included as Anglicans in religious census of the Canterbury Association.

Such competition resulted in both the duplication and waste of assets. Owen states that ‘the unsystematic and indiscriminate way in which charity was dribbled out fastened on the poor a dependence’ on it.⁷⁴ A 1817 Commission in England stated that the old Poor Law generated ‘no feelings of gratitude and not infrequently, engendered dispositions and habits calculated to separate rather than unite the interests of the higher and lower order.’⁷⁵ Private, largely voluntary, charity ‘formed a moral bond’ between giver and receiver.⁷⁶ The Poor Laws damaged this bond. The rich disliked being forced to give, especially as now they had no input on how their money was spent. The poor lost their sense of gratitude and, as the money came from a faceless state (rather than their neighbours), they came to demand more than just subsistence. Such administration ensured the poor remained lower class, unable to better themselves. Historians of the 1970s and 80s ‘criticised Victorian charities for being elitist, patchy and moralising, ameliorative rather than curative, amateur, overlapping and wasteful — rather than properly planned and reliant on the goodwill’ and ability to pay of the provider.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Owen, 218.

⁷⁵ Himmelfarb, 150.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Harris, 59.

Historian Frank Prochaska argued that certainly before the 1834 act ‘the ruling classes openly expressed a desire to subordinate the lower classes.’⁷⁸ Fraser said ‘charity was a means of social control.’⁷⁹ The rich did not need charity to strengthen their social position as much as the middle class. Harris agrees, stating that the welfare state was beneficial to the middle classes as it improved their status,⁸⁰ encouraging them to take up positions on boards administering aid.⁸¹ Owen stated ‘certainly those who wished to rise in the world of society did best exhibit a decent interest in good works’.⁸² As their role in charity organisations and administration increased, they were able to enforce their philosophy of hard work and self-help onto the poor. It was the middle class that defined the ‘evolution and shape’ of welfare in Britain.⁸³ This was particularly important too in New Zealand where there were few wealthy people and the middle class sought to cement their social position and philosophy.

The poor themselves, began to be aware of a need to support themselves, further distancing their group from paupers and strengthening their claim as respectable people, worthy of aid. The early 1800s saw such institutions as savings banks, friendly societies, co-operatives (including building societies) and assurance insurance companies become established,⁸⁴ many by the poor themselves.

The main theme of the new Poor Law was to classify and distinguish the poor from paupers, who were marginalised. In 1859, English courts defined a pauper as someone who was

⁷⁸ Olive Checkland. *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland; Social Welfare & the Voluntary Principle* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1980), 61-2.

⁷⁹ Fraser, 119.

⁸⁰ Harris, 26.

⁸¹ Along with social advancing middle class men, women too found status and acceptability in working in charitable areas. Prochaska observed that ‘in an age in which women found so many doors closed they discovered a crack in the doors of the charitable societies.’ Checkland, 60.

⁸² Owen, 165.

⁸³ Peter Baldwin, quoted in Harris, 22.

⁸⁴ Pat Thane, *The Foundations of the Welfare State* (London: Longman, 1982), 29.

‘disabled and destitute.’⁸⁵ Scottish religious leader, ‘Thomas Chalmers defined a poor man as a man in want of adequate means for his own subsistence; a pauper is a man who has this want supplemented in whole or part, out of a legal and compulsory provision.’⁸⁶

While paupers were considered to be a drain on society, although often worthy of sympathy, pauperism was seen as an insidious evil — something that people chose for themselves (‘dole bludgers’ in a more modern parlance). It ‘represented a threat to society by disrupting social and economic relationships based on the free operation of the labour market.’⁸⁷ Pauperism was a situation where people expected handouts. In a new colony, where opportunities abounded for hard working people, the idea of people getting something for nothing was looked upon with widespread, and often hostile, distaste.

Under the new English Poor Law (Poor Law Amendment Act 1834), the poor were supported and offered rights that conferred upon them the status of citizen, albeit a lowly one. The perception of poverty itself also changed: once a moral deficiency – ‘a condition caused by the personal failings of the individual, [it became] ... a result of circumstances over which a person had often no control. It was realized... that men could fall into want through no fault of their own and that it was the ... duty of the community to relieve them without imputing blame or imposing shame.’⁸⁸ Often poverty was occasional — caused by the illness of a breadwinner, lack of seasonal work or misfortune. The poor lived an uneasy life tottering between being able to support themselves and being assisted by the state. Crossman states that poverty was seen as inevitable, almost beneficial to society [due to people looking for

⁸⁵ David Englander, *Poverty and Poor Law reform in Britain : from Chadwick to Booth, 1834-1914* (London: Addison, Wesley, Longman, 1998), 49.

⁸⁶ Olive Checkland, “Chalmers and William Pultney Alison: a Conflict of Views on Scottish Social Policy,” in *The Practical and the Pious essays on Thomas Chalmers 1780-1847*, ed. A. C. Cheyne, (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1985), 131.

⁸⁷ Crossman, 7.

⁸⁸ The Report of the English Poor Law Commission (1905 – 9) quoted in Hanson, 11.

employment and] something that was impossible and even unnecessary to eliminate.⁸⁹

The concept of the 'poor as commodity' is strikingly reflected in the philosophy of many people in the period just prior to and during New Zealand's establishment. Possibly the best known quote was Arthur Young's 'everyone but an idiot knows that the lower classes must be kept poor or they will never be industrious.'⁹⁰ However, during the turbulent bridge between the 1700s and 1800s, England was aware that some form of happy balance must be reached where the poor were poor enough to work yet not so poor and dissatisfied as to revolt. Many writers believe that the establishment of the new Poor Law helped protect England from full scale revolution while neighbouring monarchies fell.⁹¹ Harris states 'the foundations of the Poor Law in England owed as much to concerns about the preservation of public order as they did to the relief of poverty.'⁹² Economy and order was something cherished by the English administration, an administration which was exported, almost totally, to New Zealand.

While widespread civil unrest did not threaten New Zealand, local upsets did occur as vocal immigrants expressed their concern at lack of job opportunities.⁹³ One of the stronger voices concerning harnessing the poverty of the labouring classes was Irish landowner and New Zealand colonialist, John Robert Godley. His view of the poor who emigrated to Canterbury was very similar to farmers importing cattle: keeping them well and settled ensured

⁸⁹ Crossman, 7.

⁹⁰ Quoted in Harris, 40. Edmund Burke, quoted in Harris (ibid), stated: 'when we affect to pity as poor, those who must labour, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. This affected pity only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found in something else than their won industry, frugality and sobriety.'

⁹¹ 'The existence of poor laws ... was widely ... believed to have helped save England from revolution ... [and] state provision for the Irish poor could be advanced as a means of reducing poverty and disorder.' Crossman, 7.

⁹² Harris, 40.

⁹³ For example, in October 1861 a petition with 1,010 signatures from unemployed workmen was presented to the Otago Provincial Council asking for employment. W B Sutch, *Poverty and Progress in New Zealand – a Reassessment*, (2nd ed.), (Wellington, A H and A W Reed, 1969), 63. Even earlier in Dunedin, settlers struck due to unemployment and prisoners supplied upwards of one hundred wheelbarrows in a few days and 'the agitation which a few designing persons ... might possibly have caused, was effectually prevented.' (1874/5 Departmental Report. Otago Provincial Council, Votes and Proceedings of the Otago Provincial Council (Dunedin, Otago Provincial Council, 1875).

productive farming and economic gains. Contented workers also meant fewer problems or confrontations the provincial leaders had to deal with.

England's Poor Law was not adopted by New Zealand, due to a number of factors, including lack of funds and an initial belief that such resources would not be required. It did, however, provide a basis from whence administrations could compare and adapt. While in terms of legislation and administration England had authority to direct how New Zealand organised its charitable aid, Scotland also influenced thinking, especially in Otago. Different circumstances and philosophies saw England and Scotland devise individual means of poor relief.

Scotland first began to pass laws regarding the poor in the 1400s, although, like England, many were concerned with the suppression of begging rather than care of the poor. For example, in 1424, Scotland passed three enactments to control beggars and vagabonds the second of which, like England's 1349 act, made a distinction between able-bodied beggars and those who were unable to earn their livelihood.⁹⁴ In 1579 there was *An Act for the Punishment of Strange [i.e. foreign] and Idle Beggars and Reliefe of the Pure and Impotent*. This decreed compulsory support of the deserving, local poor, sometimes through taxation.⁹⁵

Scotland's Poor Law Act came into being in August 1845, just three years before Otago was settled. Although it is seen as a significant event by many historians, in reality the manner in which the poor were assisted changed little. The Act did allow the parishes or boroughs that provided assistance to assess ratepayers and impose a poor rate, but it did not introduce compulsory taxation, as occurred in England.

⁹⁴ Lindsay, 12.

⁹⁵ Taxes, based on land values came into being in 1649.

The Scots did consider compulsory taxation to provide for their needy, but they decided against it. Scottish parishes employed a number of means to raise money to assist the poor, such as renting out mort cloths (shrouds) or pew rents. Other income was derived from special collections at harvest festivals, during celebrations such as coronations, weddings – royal or local, or cessation of hostilities. Even in New Zealand, some parishes employed a day of contemplation and humiliation before communion where money was donated.⁹⁶ Fees for baptisms and banns, and ringing bells at weddings or funerals were also useful fundraising activities.

Although Scotland often boasted that they could provide for their poor by voluntary giving, unlike their English neighbours, many historians, such as Lindsay, suggest that the large number of charitable societies were as much a means to dodge heavy poor taxes as they were a genuine concern for their less fortunate neighbours. Giving, on their terms, might mean people were spared being told what and when to give.⁹⁷

As well as free giving, self-help was also strongly advocated. People like Thomas Chalmers believed that ‘the English ... system made people more dependent on charity, encouraging vice and duplicity, since its promise of constant funding provided a licence to squander any resources one had in the sure knowledge that no one would go hungry. [The Scottish system was] ... the vital factor in fostering communities where the people were more honest, independent and morally upright.’⁹⁸ Although Scotland was proud of their ideas, English commissioners discovered that less was spent on relief by Scotland than in England.⁹⁹

⁹⁶ Alison Clarke, “The Presbyterian Way of Life in nineteenth-century New Zealand” (paper presented to the Presbyterian Research Network, Dunedin, 15 October 2009), 11
www.presbyterian.org.nz/archives/presresnetworkoct09.pdf

⁹⁷ For example, those who donated to the Aberdeen ‘Poor’s Hospital’ did so ‘in consideration of being freed from the untimely visits of those troublesome mendicants’, Lindsay, 71.

⁹⁸ Mary T. Furgol, “Chalmers and Poor Relief: an Incidental Sideline?” in *The Practical and the Pious: Essays on Thomas Chalmers 1780-1847*, ed. A. C. Cheyne (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1985), 116.

⁹⁹ Lindsay, 171.

Scotland established four classes of poor as opposed to England's two. The first group were the very old or very young, and those who had a disease or a physical handicap that prevented them working. Those with physical deformities were not guaranteed assistance however; it was thought that people could still contribute something to their upkeep, for example blind people could spin and deaf people could work as cooks.¹⁰⁰ These people were placed on a roll of 'ordinary poor' and entitled to regular relief from their parish. 'To many people the roll meant complete degradation', it was a deterrent in itself. Many people would rather beg, or starve than allow themselves to be placed on it.¹⁰¹ To be eligible, a person must have neither possessions nor funds; if they did have any, they had to hand it all over to the parish. This section of the Act was used to form the much hated Gregory Clause in Ireland, an 1847 amendment to their Poor Law.¹⁰² It was also employed by New Zealand Charitable Aid Boards, so that any wages, windfalls or donations from family had to be declared and handed over to agencies as recompense for the amount expended for their upkeep.

The other groups were: those who received occasional relief, this was often due to misfortune, such as illness or failed harvests; the unemployed who through no fault of their own could not find work. The last group were those who could work but chose not to; for these people little relief was available and the harsh punishments suggested, such as the death penalty for 'repeat offenders', were reserved. Unlike England, the Scottish unemployed rarely were recipients of aid, possibly this was due to more industrialized England having a surplus of able bodied people unable to find work as opposed to largely agrarian Scotland. While some saw this as a negative thing, 'English reformers in the 1830s were impressed

¹⁰⁰ This idea that being disabled did not guarantee people charity was long held, for example in 1897 the *Ashburton Guardian* claimed that there were 344 people in New Zealand registered as being blind, but of them, only 4 received charitable aid "Local and General", *Ashburton Guardian*, 26 January, 1897.

<http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>

¹⁰¹ Lindsay, 18.

¹⁰² 'The Gregory clause prohibited people who owned more than a quarter of an acre from collecting any type of relief. Landholders who owned just over a quarter of an acre, but who were still starving were forced, either to give up their land, or starve.' <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~cbstork/famine.html>.

with the character forming potential of the Scottish system, compared to what they saw to be the pauperizing tendencies of the extravagant rate of their own.’¹⁰³

Nicholls, in his report on the Irish Poor Law (in 1836) stated ‘the example of an organised system of relief based on voluntary contributions is afforded in Scotland where it has been eminently successful.’¹⁰⁴ While he does not explain why he believed Scotland was a success, it could have been due to the country’s well developed and relatively universal parish system. In England, with more diverse branches of Christianity, as well as more fluid administration boundaries, management of a voluntary system, where often people did not know their neighbours, would be more difficult. The parish-based care network of Scotland compared with the more civil-based administration of England was one of the significant differences between the two countries.

Another difference between the two countries was that while originally the administration of aid in Scotland was, as in England, supervised by civil leaders, from 1597 this role was handed over to the kirk and aid became parish based (although in large cities magistrates and town council were also involved.) The kirk often acted as agent for government funded, nationwide initiatives — such as dispensing oatmeal or other assistance in times of distress. In Scotland, administering poor relief was part of the minister’s duties (both the collection and distribution of voluntary contributions, as well as raising assessments both voluntary and compulsory),¹⁰⁵ whereas England paid official commissioners to administer the poor and the funds collected for them.

While there were significant differences between England and Scotland, there were as many similarities. Both countries passed laws that promised compulsory support of the poor, which

¹⁰³ Englander, 47.

¹⁰⁴ Nicholls, 149.

¹⁰⁵ Furgol, 116.

could be funded by various forms of taxation. Although by no means solving the problem of providing for the poor, it did offer minimal relief. However, those who had to pay the levies were naturally antagonistic towards the extra expense which they incurred. As donations decreased in the face of increased appeals for aid, many Charitable Aid Boards in New Zealand ‘threatened’ the public, especially large rural landowners, with a poor rate in attempt to increase their donations. A Poor Tax, however, was an anathema to the colonists.

While many in England and Scotland approved of the new and consistent means to provide relief, others, especially in England, feared that free giving would reduce. This often occurred as people thought they paid enough through their taxes, as happened in New Zealand after the 1885 Act. This naturally placed more strain on providers and, ironically, increased the amount demanded of citizens. England and Scotland had wealthy, generous families and individuals in number who could and would provide large bequests or donations. New Zealand, however, had few philanthropic avenues to turn to, so began investigating means to pay for the minimal aid that it provided to its citizens.

The majority of aid provided to New Zealanders was ‘outrelief’, which saw recipients staying in their own homes, rather than being cared for in institutions (referred to as inrelief). Legislation in both England and Scotland required communities (or groups of small communities) to erect refuges for the needy. Due to the different categories of ‘poor’ in these countries the criteria for admission differed. Scottish poorhouses housed people so destitute that most were incapable of work. England had workhouses where individuals and families were housed where they were expected to work for their meagre board and food.¹⁰⁶ Workhouses were designed and promoted as a place of last resort. People would risk death

¹⁰⁶ Crossman, 11 states that the New Poor Law envisaged that outdoor relief would be provided to the impotent poor, while the able bodied would only access aid via the workhouse.

rather than enter a workhouse.¹⁰⁷ 'It was a cruel thing to decent people who exchanged liberty and all that they knew of home and loving companionship for a harsh discipline or, worse, brutal tyranny, squalor and maybe semi starvation.'¹⁰⁸ In New Zealand, while there were no work houses, institutions such as old people's homes and orphanages were painted with the same dreary brush.¹⁰⁹

To save money the old and poor were often farmed out to host families, their keep paid for by the community.¹¹⁰ While it kept costs down and provided an extra pair of hands for the hosts, the level of care was variable. New Zealand too employed host families. While there were instances where adults were boarded out with families,¹¹¹ mostly this option was reserved for 'neglected' children that otherwise would have found themselves in Industrial Schools. This was considered a much better option as it reduced costs. It was also thought that living with families would produce better socialised children as opposed to those who remained in institutions that were sometimes left traumatised and socially inept. An added bonus was that the children could be trained to become farm workers while providing additional labour for rural families.

Community based relief was a feature of the administration in England, but it was a particularly important aspect in Scotland, especially in the Free Church community, which founded Otago. My research suggests that not only did this foster community spirit — neighbours helping each other as a form of social insurance, but it was thought less likely to

¹⁰⁷ Such 'stoicism' was praised by more comfortable members of the community. For example, Lindsay, 58, states that during a period of bad weather resulting in little work being available families were 'praised for starving rather than begging.'

¹⁰⁸ W. B. Sutch, *The Quest for Security in New Zealand 1840 – 1966* (Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1966), 5.

¹⁰⁹ My Grandmother spoke of the conditions of family members she visited in old peoples' homes and orphanages, where lack of food and warmth, cramped conditions and meagreness had pervaded the institutions.

¹¹⁰ See Lindsay, 30. Family historians often come across ancestors in census records living with unrelated families and listed as lodgers. For example, Thomas Stringer was listed as a lodger with a family in the 1891 census but when he died in 1904 aged 84 he had moved into the Faversham workhouse.

¹¹¹ For example the *Statement of Accounts for the Ashburton and North Canterbury United Charitable Aid Board relating to the Financial Year April 1st 1886 to March 31st 1887*, stated that £359.16.0 had been paid out for the boarding out of infirm and invalid persons.

be subjected to fraud, as locals would be more aware of who really deserved aid. In the communities under study, administering their own aid was also an expression of autonomy from their provincial capitals.

To ensure local money helped locals only, both England and Scotland introduced Settlement Laws. Like ancient travel insurance, Settlement Papers were issued to those who left their home area and were deposited with the administration of the new residence. My research indicates that these papers often acted as a character reference for the new arrival and more importantly guaranteed that the old parish would accept the individual or family back, or pay for their upkeep if necessary.¹¹²

Settlement laws outlined who could receive aid from the area. Originally, only those who were born in the parish or borough were covered if misfortune befell them. For example, in 1535, Scottish parishes were made responsible for only those poor who were born there: ‘none but natives should be allowed to beg’.¹¹³ Later, however, settlement could be obtained after residing for five years in a parish without begging or requiring aid. Those who had no settlement papers, or did not fulfil the requirements, could be denied residency.

While New Zealand had no settlement laws there was very much a feeling that aid should be provided on a locally based criteria. Not only should funds be retained in the area they were raised (which saw hospitals and old people’s homes established to ensure that local money stayed within the boundaries) but local contributions and rates should only support resident poor. This feeling was transformed into law as part of the 1885 Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Act, where people who had recently (within six months) arrived in an area and applied for aid were either sent back to their former home or were cared for but an account

¹¹² See, for example, the 1388 *Statute of Cambridge* and the 1494 *Vagabonds and Beggars Act*.

¹¹³ Lindsay, 13. This Scottish Act foreshadows the 1662 English Act of Settlement.

for their expenses was sent to their home Board.¹¹⁴ New Zealand's Charitable Aid Boards also paid their poor and needy to move to family or friends elsewhere in the country, however there are many instances where fares were paid to foreign destinations, such as Australia, America and even, in one celebrated instance, Fiji, as chapter three discusses.

Settlement laws were strictly enforced in rural communities and small towns. Large towns and cities however were unable to fully regulate people who came to them in search for opportunities. It was this focus on systems designed for the provision of relief in the rural sector that caused the most concern, especially in England. Those in the country had access to extended family and friends and were able to feed themselves with small plots or animals. The urban poor had no place to grow food to help themselves, nor the social network to offer assistance when needed. In industrialised England this rural focus was viewed negatively as it overlooked the majority. It was suitable, however, in New Zealand, as the majority of the population lived in the country. In 1881 just under 60% of the population lived in what was defined as rural,¹¹⁵ therefore most were at least semi-self-sufficient people who might need help only occasionally.

It might be argued that a rural population would not need the same help as a predominantly urban one, but New Zealand still required some means to assist those in need. Faced with an ever increasing demand for assistance from a growing population, it is fair to question why the colonial administration did not simply install the Poor Law or a variant of it to New Zealand as part of the initial body of laws.

¹¹⁴ Such expenses were often challenged, for example in 1890 Thomas Dodds received care in Timaru Hospital and an account was sent to Oamaru. A court case ensued with witnesses called to assert that Dodds had left North Otago, slightly longer than the six months mentioned in the Act. *See North Otago Times*, 16 June, 2 October and 25 October, 1890.

¹¹⁵ New Zealand sold itself as a rural paradise in the late nineteenth century. "Changing rural / urban composition of New Zealand", accessed 11 February, 2013, http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/geographic-areas/urban-rural-profile/historical-context.aspx

There were a number of reasons why this did not occur. One major factor, often overlooked by historians, is that while New Zealand was being colonised, both Scotland and England were struggling with their own Poor Laws. Frankly, there was no successfully tested means of administering aid that could be exported. Even if England had had a workable system, it may not have been able to be transported. While New Zealand had a central government¹¹⁶ it had neither the money nor the inclination to really address the problem of the needy. Its focus lay more in obtaining land, dealing with Maori and developing the country in terms of commerce, transport and communication. Care of the inhabitants was low on its priorities, especially as it was assumed the settlers were mainly self-sufficient, young, healthy people who would not need relief. Settlers were ostensibly screened and migration restricted to those who were healthy and had the means of survival.¹¹⁷ Aid therefore had to be managed by the various regions. Different priorities, combined with difficulties in transport and communication, and an often rabid parochialism, saw provincial governments¹¹⁸ establish their own forms of relief. These were often based on which country the majority of settlers hailed from. This was particularly true of the southernmost provinces.

Laws surrounding settlement and other aspects of relief administration ‘defined the basic features of the English system for the next 230 years’,¹¹⁹ and although still part of the country’s legislation they were under review when England took over the administration of New Zealand. In particular, the ideas of ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ were brought to New Zealand. With limited funds available, New Zealand aid went only to the ‘deserving’ poor –

¹¹⁶ The Constitution Act, 1852 established a semi-autonomous governing system to New Zealand. Central government took the form of a House of Representatives (elected by those who could vote, based on land holdings) and an appointed Legislative Council. ‘Parliament’ was the General Assembly. It became almost totally autonomous in 1856 (military and native affairs being the two main areas where England still had a decisive role).

¹¹⁷ Catharine Colborne, “Health and illness”, in *The New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Giselle Byrnes, (South Melbourne, Victoria: Oxford University Press Australia and New Zealand), 493.

¹¹⁸ The Constitution Act also established the provincial governments which managed the majority of business concerning their area. These provincial governments were abolished in 1876.

¹¹⁹ Harris, 40. It only changed with the National Assistance Act, 1948.

those who were considered ‘good citizens’. To ensure this, recipients were rigorously examined before and while they received aid as to their moral standing and perceived requirements.¹²⁰

The 1817 English Commission regarding aid had two main recommendations, both of which were introduced to New Zealand as part of the 1885 Act. Firstly, a central authority should be established to administer aid and second, that the authority could amalgamate parishes if required — forming Poor Law Unions. Both items caused much debate in New Zealand. One major concern about centralisation was that an unknown distant administrator would make the community pay more than a local agency would. Naturally, it would also be slow to respond in cases of real need which meant that the local community had to front up anyway. Both these fears became realities in Ashburton.

Essentially until the 1900s, New Zealand was a transplanted society which conformed to the ideas of their parent communities whether they liked it or not. Thus, while New Zealand, was legally speaking, a single country, governed by the laws and administration of England; in terms of poor relief it was very much an amalgam of ideas, borrowed from both England and Scotland, as well as regional prejudices.

As shown, these two countries under study had sometimes very different philosophies surrounding, and means of administering, aid. While both England and Scotland provided aid on a local level the way it was administered differed. England relied on compulsory taxation and handed over the management of the funds and the recipients to civic or other officials. Scotland, while refusing aid to the unemployed (unlike England) provided relief via donations and other sources of revenue. As the money came voluntarily, and given the more rural nature of Scotland; their administration was through parish or other groups elected to

¹²⁰ Chapter Three of this thesis will explain how both the administrators as well as the wider community monitored and commented on the ‘worthiness’ of those applying for or receiving aid.

manage these tasks. The following chapters will consider if these differences were transferred to Otago and Canterbury and how this impacted on the fledging communities

Chapter Two:

Inheriting the Legacy; Establishing the Colonies

This chapter explores how the differences between Scotland and England, in terms of providing and viewing aid, were transplanted to Otago and Canterbury. While there were similarities and, after the abolition of the provincial councils (in 1876), a more standardised method of administration throughout the country, the philosophies of the founders of Otago and Canterbury strongly impacted on the two provinces, which continued to adhere to the philosophy of their homelands.

Otago managed their poor on a community basis. Although there was some centralisation – Dunedin being the location for the Industrial School and orphanages — most communities paid for the support of their own needy and established their own old people’s homes. Administration was parochial; local people were voted onto hospital boards and benevolent societies. In Canterbury, north of the Rangitata at least, charitable aid was centralised in Christchurch. Money was forwarded to a single Benevolent Society which distributed aid throughout the region. The needy were given aid in institutions that were in Christchurch, except the Old Men’s Home, which was in Ashburton. Most of the members of the Committee were civil officials – especially mayors, therefore it was very much like England — a civic, centralised administration. These differences were significant and affected the inhabitants of the respective provinces. However even before these provinces were founded aid in New Zealand was variable.

New Zealand became a British colony in 1840 under the Treaty of Waitangi, which promised Maori the rights and privileges of British subjects. The British administration may have

intended to fulfil their promise concerning the native population, but they had no such inclination to provide for the European settlers in the same manner as in England. Early inhabitants of New Zealand received little or no aid from the Crown. Those requiring it relied on local networks.

Much of English society — both members of the public as well as the administration, was unsupportive of the acquisition of another colony. Missionaries and some members of the public were concerned about the negative effects on Maori, and as late as 1852, Disraeli described the colonies as ‘mill-stones round our neck.’¹²¹ While New Zealand was considered a resource for England to exploit, and income from New Zealand greedily welcomed, expenditure from England was less forthcoming. The edict from the Colonial Office was that ‘these islands were to be swept under the imperial carpet with a minimum of effort and expense’,¹²² and ‘set up on the cheap’.¹²³ Although some of the costs of establishing the new colony were to come from the New South Wales Land Fund, New Zealand was expected to be self-supporting — accumulating funds through land sales and customs tariffs. Therefore New Zealand was forced to payroll its own forms of poor relief from the beginning.

Although New Zealand was an English colony, it was not managed under the same laws and systems as England. The infant country therefore had to evolve its own methods of dealing with their poor and needy. The main focus, in the early period of settlement, was acquiring land and dealing with Maori. Traders and the ever increasing settler population were expected to fend for themselves. Beagle states that it was to be expected that a ‘society made up of mainly British (i.e. Scottish as well as English) stock’ would draw largely from the

¹²¹ C. E. Carrington, *John Robert Godley of Canterbury* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1950), 171.

¹²² W. J. Gardner, “A Colonial Economy”, in *Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. W.H. Oliver with R. Williams (Wellington: Oxford University Press, 1981), 58.

¹²³ *Ibid.* 59.

methods employed at Home to deal with social problems. However, she adds, that the ‘fact that they were in a new land ... brought ... differences’, therefore the system that evolved in New Zealand often was dissimilar to the old ways.¹²⁴ For example, ‘unlike England, New Zealand conceded no formal entitlements to relief.’¹²⁵

From the start there was a perception, created by the arrivals themselves in many instances, that New Zealand’s inhabitants were self-sufficient and strong, and therefore relief was an unnecessary expense. For example, Governor Grey established state funded hospitals in Auckland, Wellington, Wanganui and New Plymouth essentially for Maori, although they would accept destitute or deserving Europeans. While the provision of such institutions was seen as a part of the Crown’s moral responsibility to Maori, it was not considered necessary for the (then) small European population.

Certainly cost and the small, scattered population were reasons for the lack of hospitals, but the major reason was the English perception that infirmaries served only the poor and were often connected with workhouses. ‘Non-institutional aid (out relief) to the destitute had been preferred from the early colonial period. A workhouse system was thought unnecessary given the small number of destitute persons in a new colony. When aid was required it was mainly for the very young or very old; able bodied adults received aid for short periods only. Outdoor relief was given in meagre amounts and in such a way as to discourage any but the most desperate to apply.’¹²⁶

Due to distance and limited available funds, England was unable to provide a great amount of relief to its furthest dominion; it was keen, however, to exploit its resources. Even before it had added New Zealand to its stable of colonies, England had considered exporting some of

¹²⁴ Jan Margaret Beagle, “Children of the State: a Study of the New Zealand Industrial School System 1880 – 1925”. (M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1974), 2.

¹²⁵ Tennant, (1989), 2.

¹²⁶ Tennant (1989), 77.

its poor to it. In the early 1820s Wilmot-Horton, under-secretary of State of War and the Colonies, who viewed his nation's paupers as victims of 'economic change',¹²⁷ formulated plans to export the poor, thereby turning 'this curse of the mother country into a blessing for the colonies.'¹²⁸ While his motives may have been philanthropic, the main goal of such schemes was to lighten the load on English coffers rather than improve the lives of the migrants, or their new home. Charles Buller¹²⁹ said of a similar Canadian scheme established in 1819 that it was 'merely shovelling out of paupers to overseas possessions of the crown where they might die without shocking their betters with the sight or sound of their last agony.'¹³⁰

Lloyd-Pritchard adds that surplus labourers were encouraged to emigrate.¹³¹ In later years, people could pay £45 to the Otago Association and nominate a deserving family to migrate to Otago.¹³² Bloomfield speaks about those who would have their 'fate ... decided [not by themselves], but the district, parish or individual who may consider such [potential] emigrants redundant either as tenantry or as labourers.'¹³³

¹²⁷ Philip Temple, *A Sort of Conscience – The Wakefields* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2002), 129

¹²⁸ Ibid. In 1823 and 1825 Wilmot-Horton obtained government grants to export poor Irish to Canada. In 1826 and 1827 he chaired a parliamentary committee on emigration which proposed that married poor would be given free passage, land, houses and stock if they would emigrate (the money saved in poor rates would fund the venture). Horton, Sir Robert Wilmot (1784–1841)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/horton-sir-robert-wilmot-2199/text2841>, accessed 21 March 2013.

¹²⁹ Among other things the first President of the Poor Law Board in England and Lord Durham's private secretary while he was in Canada investigating the 1837 rebellion.

¹³⁰ A.H. McLintock, *Crown Colony Government in New Zealand* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1958), 152.

¹³¹ Lloyd – Pritchard, (1970). 23.

¹³² Otago Association, *Proposals for Absentees Contributing Towards the Scheme of the Settlement* (Item 61, Flotsam and Jetsam Volume three, Thomas Morland Hocken papers (ARC-0180). 'Who may invest[?] ... many though not intending to emigrate themselves yet amidst the overwhelming difficulties of providing for a growing up family, many find this an easy safe and eligible way of establishing in life a son, or a ward or other connexion and that in a fine colony and in the bosom of a peaceful religious community. Otago Association, *Scheme of the colony of the Free Church at Otago*, (Glasgow: Scottish Guardian Office, 1845), Volume 4 item 21, 8, Chapman Pamphlets.

¹³³ Paul Bloomfield, *Edward Gibbon Wakefield Builder of the British Commonwealth* (London: Longmans, 1961), p. 92.

Regardless of whether they were ‘redundant paupers’¹³⁴ or unemployed labourers, New Zealand’s earliest settlers were very much on their own when they arrived. The New Zealand Company did accept some financial responsibility for the migrants it transported, but its coffers and sympathy soon ran dry. People then began to appeal to the Government and, in turn, the Colonial Office in England, but even if England had had a workable system to export, and the inclination to do so, there simply were not the funds to provide wide scale relief. When Governor Grey arrived in 1845, the paradise that New Zealand was publicised as being was ‘virtually bankrupt.’¹³⁵ One of his first tasks was to convince the Colonial Office that their new colony could not hope to be self-sufficient and that it needed an investment to keep it going. He obtained £25,000 to instigate a series of initiatives that would ‘meet the more pressing requirements’ of the settlers.¹³⁶

Included in his initiatives was support for destitute families and illegitimate children. Grey originally envisaged that this aid would be for Maori only;¹³⁷ reinforcing the ideas that the white settlers were to provide for themselves and that aid was reserved for the most needy. His 1846 *Destitute Persons Act*, however, provided limited aid for both white and brown New Zealanders. While under this act, the Government now accepted some responsibility for the poor, old and needy, family members were expected to provide the majority of relief.

Tennant says the Destitute Persons Act ‘drew heavily’ from the New English Poor Law (1834).¹³⁸ Under that Act, families were expected to take on more responsibility for the support of their own. Government aid would be given, but only if there was no next of kin.

A Justice of the Peace or magistrate reviewed the case and determined who was destitute and

¹³⁴ Bloomfield, 91.

¹³⁵ McLintock, 236.

¹³⁶ McLintock, 237.

¹³⁷ Grey appealed to the Legislative Council for some means to prevent European fathers leaving their half caste children in a state of destitution and misery, “Legislative Council”, *The New Zealander*, 5 October 1846, accessed 24 March, 2013 via <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/cgi-bin/paperspast>.

¹³⁸ Tennant, (2004), 13. She reminds us that in England, the individual could sue their family for support, whereas in New Zealand this ‘chasing’ role was taken on by the Government.

who should assist. Thomson, however, disagrees, saying the Act was ‘the opposite of the English Poor Law, where people believed they had a ‘right’ to support from their community.’¹³⁹ While ensuring the Government expended minimal amounts on aid, the Act placed great stress on the immediate family of the needy, especially as one assumes they too would have limited resources.¹⁴⁰ To keep pace with the increased financial demands, the Act was revisited a number of times, with the responsible family members growing in scope.¹⁴¹

Labrum believes that:

although [these laws] were not as effective as anticipated, they epitomised the character of organised welfare activity at the time; the result of a powerful desire to avoid replicating the British Poor Law, which was understood to have created or perpetuated a class of dependent poor stuck in a poverty trap rather than to have alleviated poverty.¹⁴²

The Act stressed that any relief was to come from private avenues, rather than the Auckland based, financially stretched and preoccupied central Government. ‘The prevailing thought of the time agreed that private charity should be the appropriate method of poor relief.’¹⁴³ Bassett states that this belief was founded on the erroneous belief that there were members of society who had surplus resources and were willing to share them, as occurred in England. He cites the 1841 example of Grey refusing aid to a poor man, arguing that it was a case for private charity.¹⁴⁴ The Committee of the Colonial Hospital reporting to the Wellington Provincial Council in 1854 ‘said that purely charitable institutions paid for out of revenue and conducted by the Government tended to lessen the self-reliance of the people.’¹⁴⁵

¹³⁹ David Thomson, *A World Without Welfare — New Zealand’s Colonial Experiment* (Auckland: Auckland University Library, 1998), 29.

¹⁴⁰ Bassett, 31.

¹⁴¹ For example, in 1877 brothers and step-siblings became liable.

¹⁴² Bronwyn Labrum, “The Changing Meanings and Practices of Welfare 1840s – 1990s”, in *New Oxford History of New Zealand*, ed. Giselle Byrnes, (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2009), 396.

¹⁴³ Sutch, (1966), 47.

¹⁴⁴ Bassett, 31.

¹⁴⁵ Sutch, (1966), 47.

By the time Otago and Canterbury were founded, the limited system of relief established by the Government was struggling. To the 'New Chums' arriving from countries where aid, often funded by poor rates, was available; New Zealand was a shock. While many may have found this lack of care frightening, the majority (obviously those who did not require aid, at least initially), were pleased to be rid of what for many was a harsh regime. Historian Rollo Arnold quotes early settler Alfred Simmons enthusing: 'there is no Poor Law and no Poor Law Guardians! Do our readers comprehend that? We almost felt disposed to settle down in the public roadway and return devout thanks to heaven. And there are no union workhouses ... And there are no starving poor ... No outdoor poor whose hovels require to be pried into at all unseasonable hours, no workhouses to visit and no indoor beggars to bully.'¹⁴⁶

Although a land of opportunity, the history of most provinces in New Zealand begins with stranded immigrants unprepared for the climate or lack of facilities. For example, it took three months of bungling to unload the first two ships that arrived in Otago at the onset of winter, by then the supplies had been exhausted. Had it not been for Johnny Jones' farm at Waikouaiti, the Maori at Otakou and the farm Kelvin Grove owned by the Harwood's the migrants would have starved.¹⁴⁷ People were largely reliant upon the goodness of strangers. Alfred Simmons described that in New Zealand 'there are several charitable funds from which persons suffering from temporary reverses are assisted, but if a travelling labouring man is necessitated and lacks food, he has but to knock at the first door he comes to and ask and in 19 out of 20 houses he will find that the spirit of the good Samaritan dwelleth therein.'¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Rollo Arnold, *The Farthest Promised Land – English Villagers, New Zealand Immigrants of the 1870s* (Wellington: Victoria University Press with Price Milburn, 1981), 248-9.

¹⁴⁷ Erik Olssen, *A History of Otago* (Dunedin: John McIndoe 1984), 35.

¹⁴⁸ Arnold, 249. Although Arnold himself believes this is a little too optimistic, he repeats the comments of 14 year old Mary Miller, who said 'people are not like they are in England' after she was inundated with offers of help after her mother became ill. Arnold 253.

Arnold suggests that generosity, especially among those of similar backgrounds, was ‘encouraged by the fact that basic necessities of life such as food, warmth and shelter, were available in cheap abundance.’¹⁴⁹ ‘The village labourer brought with him a tradition of mutual self-help ... and in New Zealand there was little to inhibit the free expression of this spirit.’¹⁵⁰ Apart from being the Christian thing to do, there was the belief that helping one’s neighbours was a form of informal insurance, where reciprocation was expected.

Should the community be unable or unwilling to assist, migrants could approach the New Zealand Company; after all it transported them with the promise of an improved life. The Company accepted some responsibility, for a short time, although in many instances relief was given for other reasons such as financial, or just good public relations. For example, a medical officer was sent to Canterbury by the Company in 1849 after one of Mr Cass’ surveying party died. Fenwick states that another reason for the doctor’s arrival was that the party working on the crucial Lyttelton–Sumner road were paid even if they were sick (but at a lesser amount). Captain Thomas believed that having a doctor on site would reduce down time (treating illnesses as they occurred, or deeming the patient fit for work) thereby speeding up the process and reducing costs.¹⁵¹

Originally the New Zealand Company, then the Government, only provided assistance to ‘special cases’ such as people who were forced off land due to Maori attack.¹⁵² The Company then broadened its criteria to include unemployed migrants. For example, the first emigrants to Nelson (founded in 1841) were given 14s for relief work (such as building roads and jetties) and 5s of rations. Yet in Otago (founded in 1848), the Company paid 3d a day

¹⁴⁹ Arnold, 252.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ P Clennell Fenwick, *The Christchurch Hospital Historical and Descriptive Sketch* (Christchurch: Andrews, Baty, 1926), 3.

¹⁵² Tennant (1989), 4.

plus rations, (whereas private workers could obtain wages between 3s 6d – 4s 1d.¹⁵³ ‘The Company had guaranteed all labourers work and wages if private capitalists could not but as resources dwindled William [Wakefield] was told to employ only labourers who were indispensable to the Company’s activities.’¹⁵⁴ Later, the Company requested money from the Government ‘to preserve from ruin the capitalists and from starvation the emigrant labourers.’¹⁵⁵ The Company and provincial or central governments were given the role of provider that at ‘Home’ was the domain of the parish or state, which, says Bassett, the Company at least ‘resented’.¹⁵⁶ Without official aid, local communities supported the unemployed, seeing it as both an investment in the area’s future as well the only ‘proper’ thing to do.

People who espoused the laissez faire philosophy however, were against such intervention. Prospective migrants to Canterbury, for example, may have been concerned to hear Godley in 1850, after his ‘inspection’ of Otago, comment that he felt ‘paying’ the unemployed was a ‘worthless means of relieving distress. [Men were paid for pretending to work], ‘standing with hands in [their] pockets and pipe in his mouth. Paying for such loafers gave the impression that there is a surplus of labour when there was none. [He also said] that in Otago the wages were ‘too high, which paralyse[d] agricultural enterprise and increases costs of food and other necessities.’¹⁵⁷ Godley’s colony would have lower wages and people would

¹⁵³ Temple, 304.

¹⁵⁴ Temple, 367. Later, (p, 489), he states ‘the labourers who [came] out under the Company’s schemes had received nothing but unemployment and hardship’.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid. 374. Burns states that there was a depression during the second half of 1844 and early 1845 due to unemployment. Patricia Burns, *Fatal Success — A History of the New Zealand Company*, ed. Henry Richardson (Auckland: Heinemann Reed, 1989), p, 276. This ‘saw cuts in the Company’s budget which resulted in hundreds of labourers being thrown out of work and then confronted with the choice of working a small plot of land or starving.’

¹⁵⁶ Bassett, 32. [However, David MacMillan, *By Ways of History of Medicine, with Special Reference to Canterbury New Zealand* (Christchurch: Peryer, 1946), 70 disagrees, saying that the ‘Company felt a duty to the poor and sick and especially for the sick among their staff. In Wellington the Company’s temporary hospital treated the staff and the surgeon attended some of the destitute in their homes’.]

¹⁵⁷ Robert Godley, ‘*Description of Otago in 1850*, Flotsam and Jetsam Volume one, Thomas Morland Hocken papers (ARC-0180).

have to work on the land of others to support themselves. Relief, as seen in Otago, would not be so readily given. Certainly from the outset, it appears that Canterbury was a far more get on your own feet first settlement, whereas Otago focussed on establishing a community – even choosing to build the houses of others and work on their own homes in their very limited spare time.

New Zealand's scattered communities were rapidly establishing their own unique form of administration. With the creation of the provinces in 1852, these divergent methods were given ratification. Each province would be administered by Provincial Councils. While funding for the Councils would come from the central Legislative Council, they were allowed to spend their funds and administer their province with very little interference from outside.¹⁵⁸

The provincial councils became the forum for decisions on local government, finance, education, immigration policy and other matters of vital importance.¹⁵⁹ McLintock says that as 'they met before the General Assembly and [as] Grey provided them with revenue the ... Council's seized the initiative in legislation and became a more powerful element in politics than the Colonial Office had intended.'¹⁶⁰

This change in administration pleased some, such as Godley, who believed the provinces had to 'strive for political power, the power of virtually administering their own affairs, disposing of their own revenues and governing their own country.'¹⁶¹ Otago statesman Captain Cargill,

¹⁵⁸ Dalziel, 94.

¹⁵⁹ Excluded from the sphere of provincial control were matters concerning: custom duties, courts of justice – other than those of summary jurisdiction, coinage and currency, weights and measures, post office, bankruptcy, beacons and lighthouses, shipping dues, marriages, crown and native lands, disabilities or restrictions on natives, altering the civil or criminal law, inheritance and wills. (McLintock, *Crown Colony Government in New Zealand* (Wellington: Government Printer, 1958), 347

¹⁶⁰ Dalziel, 94.

¹⁶¹ McLintock (1958), 310.

however, felt that Otago wasn't quite ready: 'it was still in its infancy and preoccupied with the demands of pioneering.'¹⁶²

Wakefield's vision for New Zealand

While the difference between the provinces of Otago and Canterbury is the subject of this study, it is incorrect to state that the two areas were totally different. Before 1852 they were governed by a single administration, if unwillingly. Otago and Canterbury shared another major link, both with each other as well as the rest of the country, save Auckland — the indomitable Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Although Otago and Canterbury were founded on specific principles, the overarching idea of settlement was Wakefield's utopian dream of a 'brighter Britain'.¹⁶³

Wakefield's great granddaughter enthused: 'The colonies were designed to build up strong, virile new races as part of the one great British Empire, but they were designed still more specifically for the creation of healthy happy human beings. Above and beyond his love for England ... soared his greater love for humanity in general.'¹⁶⁴

There may be many negatives connected with Wakefield's scheme in reality, but in theory it had some noble and even practical tenets.¹⁶⁵ His theories were tinted with concern for others, due, in part, to his Puritan background. His paternal grandmother was a liberal Quaker whose

¹⁶² Tom Brooking, *And Captain of their Souls – an Interpretive Essay on the Life and Times of Captain William Cargill* (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1984), 93.

¹⁶³ Grace Neill, speaking to an international conference for women in 1899, quoted in Tennant, (1989), 3.

¹⁶⁴ Irma O'Connor, *Edward Gibbon Wakefield the Man Himself* (London: Selwyn and Blount, 1928), 103. However, behind the familial bias there is little concrete evidence that Wakefield concerned himself with the happiness of the labouring classes who he saw as necessary elements to the success of his colonies – certainly the lack of forethought in assisting them beyond subsidised employment, should mishaps occur is but one example of his lack of planning.

¹⁶⁵ It is easy to focus on the bad publicity that Wakefield, and his far reaching network of family and friends, have received, but Edward did have some valid ideas about colonisation. Possibly 'bi-polar' (Temple, 536), 'unscrupulous, especially where money was concerned', and ambitious (ibid, 535) Karl Marx called him the 'most notable political economist of the 1830s,' (ibid, 132.)

‘whole life was a devotion to benevolence.’¹⁶⁶ Edward’s father, a businessman, was also involved in charity, but while he was keen to help the poor and needy he also exhibited a ‘tough love’ element, which his son later espoused.¹⁶⁷ Edward senior ‘was opposed to indiscriminate relief for the poor which would [, he believed,] encourage idleness and extravagance. [He felt] there should be a distinction between a family brought into distress through sickness or misfortune and the family reduced to want by their own idleness and vice.’¹⁶⁸

Edward Gibbon’s scheme was relatively simple: transplant the ‘successful’ class structure of England to the colonies. While Wakefield may have wanted to transplant ‘the social order of pre-industrial England’,¹⁶⁹ he did not wish to transfer the class antagonism.¹⁷⁰ He ‘and his fellow colonial reformers saw planned emigration as the logical solution to the problems and discontent of rural England.’¹⁷¹ He ‘believed that in New Zealand, English civilisation could be re-established without the horrors of destitution.’¹⁷² It was to be ‘a planned reproduction of the English village complete with squire, parson and servants.’¹⁷³ A ‘kitset England’ complete’ [with kitset houses,] ... Wakefield never considered the infinitely unpredictable

¹⁶⁶ Temple, 9. Priscilla Wakefield funded several charities for poor women, children and even chimney sweeps. Temple states ‘her most enduring philanthropic achievement’ was introducing savings schemes to England in the form of the Female Benefit Club (1798), which has been said to be the forerunner to savings banks (ibid, 10). Interestingly, she also established a school of industry for girls as well as a spinning factory. Clearly, while she felt pleasure in conferring happiness (11) she did not encourage loafing, the poor had to work for their money.

¹⁶⁷ One of the first pamphlets Edward senior wrote was entitled: *Improving the miserable conditions of the poor and alleviating the increasing burden of the poor rates on landowners*. Temple, 17.

¹⁶⁸ Temple, 18.

¹⁶⁹ Erik Olssen, *A History of Otago*, (Dunedin: John McIndoe 1984), 31.

¹⁷⁰ Puritan in context, Wakefield wanted a community where all classes appreciated each other for their good qualities. While a noble ideal, it also was self-serving in that the Wakefield’s were, at best, middle class, any blurring of class lines would only help to improve their status, thereby allowing them access to power and influence.

¹⁷¹ Arnold, 21. His feelings may have been that of his father who stated: ‘The rich do not sufficiently estimate the virtues of the poor. ... The higher classes should be immediately awakened to the duty of assisting the lower’. Temple, 18.

¹⁷² Sutch (1969), 31.

¹⁷³ C. A. Blyth, “Special Case – the Political Economy of New Zealand,” in *Society contemporary perspective*, eds. Stephen D. Webb and John Collette (Sydney: Wiley, 1973), 3.

behaviour of the people who by and large were motivated to go to the colonies to escape their old constricting or impoverished environment.’¹⁷⁴

Unlike other schemes, Wakefield encouraged a good cross-section of society to migrate. ‘The essence of [his system] was that it should be undertaken by ... emigrants selected in due proportion of age and sex, and provided with a supply of working capital proportionate to the number of agricultural settlers.’¹⁷⁵ ‘Men of substance would be attracted to the new colony by the assurance that there would be no shortage of labour.’¹⁷⁶

While the financial input of the wealthy was important to the success of Wakefield’s settlements, they also brought that ‘essential — civilisation, to a colony.’¹⁷⁷ The gentry could lead and govern the other classes, and their very presence would encourage others, such as the poor, to settle there.¹⁷⁸ This idea was especially attractive with the Canterbury Association and Godley in particular.

Olssen states ‘the systematic colonization of New Zealand and South Australia was explicitly justified as an attempt to forestall a domestic Malthusian crisis by exporting surplus population. ... By exporting surplus capital as well as people, the colonisers hoped to increase profitability and productivity in Britain, thus saving it from stagnation and turmoil, while creating a wealthier new society.’¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Temple, 134.

¹⁷⁵ Carrington, 56.

¹⁷⁶ Carrington, 57. Obviously, one needed the middle and labouring class to work and increase productivity and the economy, but he also felt it ‘essential that men and women of gentle birth and upbringing ... emigrate in order to provide an antidote to the rough manners and morals of that colonial society whose traits were vulgarity and smartness’. A. H. McLintock, *The History of Otago – the Origins and Growth of a Wakefield Class settlement* (Dunedin: Otago Centennial Historical Publications, 1949), 152-3.

¹⁷⁷ Temple, 131.

¹⁷⁸ Temple, 132.

¹⁷⁹ Erik Olssen, “Wakefield and the Scottish Enlightenment, with Particular Reference to Adam Smith and his ‘Wealth of Nations,’” in *Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Colonial Dream: a Reconsideration* (Wellington: The Friends of the Turnbull Library, 1997), 48.

While Wakefield ‘constantly preached his ideal of close settlements composed of all the best elements of society ... [and] carefully selected and vetted [the free emigrants], there were no checks on the character of capitalists, nor any requirement that landowners should actually go to New Zealand.’ ‘It did not seem to bother him that absentee landowners would mean ... a distortion to his ideal society.’¹⁸⁰ Indeed, in Canterbury, Wakefield encouraged absentee landowners to buy up large areas of land to payroll the emigration of free labourers and the setting up of the settlement something that the Company could not afford to attempt alone.

While this did assist the financing of the settlement it also brought problems. Importantly, it reduced the availability of ‘suitable’ men to help administer the Colony. Even the unexpected preponderance of sheep (rather than the expected cows)¹⁸¹ in Canterbury (resulting in a labour surplus) meant that the semi-feudal environment, where the local gentry would care for ‘their’ people, was absent.

Wakefield’s vision was hampered by its lack of practicality. ‘None of the emigration planners had adequately thought through the real costs and consequences of their schemes. ... Could [the settlements become] self-financing [and could they] survive as effective social and economic, let alone civilised, communities?’¹⁸² Burns commented that on 22 May 1839 the Directors of the New Zealand Company met the ‘Committee of the First Colony’ [comprised of heads of households and others who were intending to emigrate to New Zealand] and some ‘realized that they were taking into their hands the future of dozens of families in a venture that was in many ways blindly speculative.’¹⁸³ Planning was incomplete and based on ideals rather than practicalities. It is little wonder, therefore, that vital necessities such as aid for the misfortunate would be ‘forgotten’ in planning and preparation.

¹⁸⁰ Temple, 261.

¹⁸¹ Burns, 102 states that Wakefield disapproved of sheep farming as he thought a glut of wool inevitable and it was not encouraged in his system.

¹⁸² Temple, 130.

¹⁸³ Temple, 105.

While the administration was lacking in this area, the migrants too were often less than satisfactory. Wakefield's ideal group were from the 'uneasy class', a term that he coined to mean middle class people who were comfortable but struggling to retain their position,¹⁸⁴ and those who sought to better themselves. Burns refers to these people as 'the new poor ... the most lively and energetic; they included skilled tradesmen, farmers with capital and professional men.'¹⁸⁵ 'The discontent of the younger gentry, the sense of insecurity in the lower middle classes and the misery of the poor, all groups brimming with potential'¹⁸⁶ were eagerly sort after by such groups as the Canterbury and Otago Associations.

A common objection against systematic colonisation was that it would result in a 'creaming off of the best elements in the country, much to the national disadvantage'... 'It is not the aged, the infirm ... the idiots that go; it is the youth, the strength, the wealth, the spirit.'¹⁸⁷ Yet on the other side of the world men like Pember Reeves saw not the best arriving in New Zealand, 'but the old,¹⁸⁸ lame and blind, aged widows, young women with infants, others pregnant and without their husbands[,]'¹⁸⁹ ... and the invalid given up by the doctors.'¹⁹⁰

These were the very people Wakefield did not want as he 'realised that they could not possibly make good colonists as their energies had been sapped and their self-reliance destroyed by the hardships of their struggle.'¹⁹¹ Additionally, 'no new colony ever escaped an influx of immigrants of another type — the scapegraces and the ne'er-do-wells ...packed

¹⁸⁴ Burns, 65 'No man likes that his sons should fall or his daughter marry into a circle much inferior to his own.'

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ J Patricia Morrison. *The Evolution of a City the Growth of the City and Suburbs of Christchurch the Capital of Canterbury 1850 – 1903* (Christchurch: Christchurch City Council, 1948), 9.

¹⁸⁷ Bloomfield, 95.

¹⁸⁸ While most settlements had strict age limits, older people were often brought out as part of families, and on some occasions the authorities would provide assisted passages if it meant a 'desirable' family would be obtained, Arnold, 249.

¹⁸⁹ Sutch, (1966), 41.

¹⁹⁰ Sutch, (1966), 62. Pember Reeves added 'it is to the colonies that the clerk who has stolen from his employer [is sent] ... , the drunkard or the gambler whose relations are prepared to pay for his passage to get rid of him; the idiot who is just not violent enough to put in an asylum ... all these wrecks are thrown on to colonial shores.'

¹⁹¹ McLintock, (1949), 153.

off by their relatives in the hope that they might turn over a new leaf in a new society.’¹⁹² Most immigration schemes, including those of Otago and Canterbury, had stringent tests to ensure their migrants were healthy and had the necessary means of survival. Even then they relied on a healthy and accident free environment, and enough food and money (or work) to make the new life the migration companies promised a reality.

Sutch states that often immigrants were chosen ‘carelessly’¹⁹³ ... many landed without enough to buy a meal.¹⁹⁴ For example, when Joseph Hunt, arrived in Canterbury in 1856 he had only ‘2½d in his pocket,’¹⁹⁵ but after years of hard work in Wakanui, Ashburton, he ended up owning many acres of fertile and profitable land. Others were not as successful. Of course, it was not just the assisted emigrants who might require aid. Those who paid their own passage, or were sponsored by others, were often unsuitable for life in the colonies. ‘What [could men like Godley be expected to do with] distressed elderly governesses ... unemployed seamstresses from London slums, or ... young gentlemen who had no capital and were too proud to work?’¹⁹⁶

Sutch states that almost every time a ship arrived there were applications for ‘benevolent assistance’.¹⁹⁷ As most ships in the 1870s had Canterbury or Otago as their final destination, it follows that these two provinces received a number of requests. For example, in Canterbury John Williams died of heat exhaustion on the bridle path just two days after he, his wife and six children arrived in Christchurch. Two fellow *Randolph* passengers set up a

¹⁹² Carrington, 141.

¹⁹³ Again, this was not as true for Otago and Canterbury as it was for earlier settlements.

¹⁹⁴ Sutch (1966), 41.

¹⁹⁵ Arnold, 84.

¹⁹⁶ Carrington, 141. Whom Godley calls ‘entirely unfit for a colonial career’. John Godley, *A Selection from the writings and speeches of John Robert Godley*, collected and ed. James Edward Fitzgerald (Christchurch: Press Office, 1863), 207.

¹⁹⁷ Sutch (1966), 55.

public subscription and other settlers, including the Deans, provided shelter.¹⁹⁸ Interestingly, while the two men who arranged the subscription were Anglican, the families who supported the distressed Presbyterians were of the same faith. This suggests that even in an infant community, while support was interdenominational, hands on care was reserved for ‘one’s own’, as it had been at Home. While the community was willing to assist those in need, the perception of ‘deserving’ was still in evidence. On 22 August Henry Nippriss died (a week after his daughter). Comment was made that ‘his poor young wife is inconsolable *but she has a brother.*’¹⁹⁹ The fact that the young woman had suffered was acknowledged but because she had a male to, one hopes, take responsibility of her, somehow the severity of her situation was reduced.

Similarly, in 1850 in Otago carpenter Henry Monson, already financially stressed, arrived home to find his house aflame — he lost everything. While a public subscription raised £13.15.0, he appealed to the Governor and was given the position of first gaoler of Dunedin.²⁰⁰ All these examples illustrate that care was forthcoming in what was deemed necessary or deserving cases, and often came in the form of an immediate financial donation followed by an offer of work. Long term financial commitments, however, were not viable due to limited funds.

Apart from the acquisition of self-sufficient migrants, Wakefield believed that ‘the fundamentals of a [successful] colony were: land, capital and labour and the maintenance of a delicate balance among all three.’²⁰¹ To achieve this, he established the principle of *sufficient*

¹⁹⁸ Mrs Williams later set up a small business selling yeast, before money from Home allowed her to establish a drapery business. Colin Amodeo, *The Summer Ships Being an Account of the First Six Ships Sent Out from England by the Canterbury Association in 1850-51* (Christchurch: The Caxton, Press, 2000), 174. Another example from Amodeo: (p. 213) on 21 April 1851 Alfred Playstead widower died. “Mr Dudley solicited charity for his orphaned children...the collection was very good’ and Charlotte Godley took the 14 year old Charity as a housemaid.

¹⁹⁹ Amodeo, 213.

²⁰⁰ See Elsie Locke, *The Gaoler* (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 1978).

²⁰¹ McLintock, (1949), 152.

price — ‘the artificial restriction of the supply of land ... which ... would prevent labourers from turning into landowners too soon.’²⁰² The money obtained by his Company from the inflated land sales would pay for subsidised, or even free, passages for fit, ‘young people who would increase the available workforce and population’. Wakefield spoke of ‘young marriageable persons ... whose reproductive powers [were] embarrassing at home [but] would prove valuable abroad.’²⁰³

Article 5 of Wakefield’s *Outline of a System of Colonization* states ‘that the supply of labourers should be as nearly as possible proportioned to the demand for labour ..., so that capitalists shall never suffer from an urgent want of labourers and that labourers shall never want well-paid employment.’²⁰⁴ This well-paid employment would ensure the labourers could afford essentials and look after themselves and, at a later date, buy their own plot of land.²⁰⁵ Although Sutch agrees, he adds that there was no ‘intention that all or even a majority of [settlers] should be farmers. There ... continued a distinct prejudice against making land easy to get. The emphasis was laid on maintaining an adequate labour supply.’²⁰⁶

While labourers of all types were encouraged, what were really wanted were agricultural labourers. However they ‘formed too small a proportion of the assisted emigrants which the

²⁰² McLintock, (1949), 152-3. Bloomfield, 135 suggests that the ‘price should be high enough... to prevent labourers from becoming landowners’ for at least two or three years.

²⁰³ McLintock, (1949), 153.

²⁰⁴ Article 5 of *Outline of a System of Colonization*, appendix of A Letter from Sydney, in Wakefield, Edward Gibbon, *The collected works of Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, edited M. F. Lloyd-Pritchard (Collins: Auckland, 1969), 180.

²⁰⁵ Dr Love questions whether Wakefield did intend for labouring immigrants to improve their lot, as the Company propaganda pushed. ‘Canterbury, the province which followed his proposals most closely, was certainly not a model of allowing the lower classes to rise to aristocratic heights.’ Ngatata Love, “Edward Gibbon Wakefield: a Maori Perspective,” in *Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Colonial Dream: A Reconsideration* (Wellington: The Friends of the Turnbull Library, 1997), 3. Yet Olssen, 48 states ‘in Wakefield’s fertile mind New Zealand [was an experiment] creating a society where labourers could escape the natural slavery of the inherited position by acquiring land, ... systematic colonization would civilise those who in Britain were condemned to barbarism.’

²⁰⁶ (1966), 41.

New Zealand Company sent out.²⁰⁷ Burns says ‘the Company was quite clear on the type of emigrants it wanted. ... It looked first for agricultural labourers and rural mechanics then workers in the building industry and domestic servants. It preferred young married couples of good character and preferably without children.²⁰⁸ But what did it get? Many more children than it wished for — 40% on some shiploads, more urban tradesmen and fewer agricultural labourers. [In fact,] some surprising tradesmen arrived in New Zealand including a number of weavers and spinners who were unemployed in their thousands in Britain [many of whom were sent to Canterbury to struggle as farmers], soap boilers, tinkers and a maker of dolls eyes.’²⁰⁹

Carrington also states that Wakefield wished ‘to prevent the labourers rapid dispersal over a wider area of land than they could use. To keep them concentrated [would have] the two economic advantages of public works and a home market for their products (which Godley pointed out was missing in Otago) and the moral advantage of an organised social life; — concentration is civilisation’.²¹⁰ Bloomfield explains that while concentration may work well in some areas; in others, such as Adelaide and Dunedin, it led to distress as people clustered around towns vainly seeking employment while the hinterland was desperately short of labour.²¹¹

While Wakefield’s ideas were utilised throughout the settlements, many believe it was Canterbury that followed his theories most closely. Indeed, Bohan comments that one of the many difficulties between [Governor] Grey and the Association was Grey’s accusation that Canterbury ‘deliberately excluded the working class from land ownership, [which Bohan

²⁰⁷ Arnold, 18.

²⁰⁸ ‘Married couples of good character ... [were] given preference so that social barbarism of frontier settlements would be avoided’, Temple, 131.

²⁰⁹ Temple, 191.

²¹⁰ Carrington 56.

²¹¹ See Bloomfield, 142-3.

calls] ‘unfair and false.’²¹² Despite Bohan’s claims many people viewed Canterbury as ‘a very aristocratic settlement’.²¹³ While those on the outside used this term negatively, the province’s inhabitants often thought this a well-deserved compliment. A publication produced for Canterbury’s fiftieth jubilee stated: ‘The principle and object of [Canterbury’s] foundation had peculiar attractions for a superior class of settlers not usually found emigrating to the colonies ... bringing with them the refinements and also a good deal of the exclusiveness of good society[.] They very sensibly gave a tone and character to the settlement that, notwithstanding the levelling down tendency of colonial life, it has preserved to the present day.’²¹⁴

One can debate whether Canterbury’s migrants were far superior to other areas, but what is not in question is that the transportation of the established class system of England did encourage people to accept and expect a greater involvement in the provision of relief by the state, and the upper class, than other communities that had a more ‘relaxed’ class structure, such as Otago. Otago was far more egalitarian in outlook and assumed that men would endeavour to become self-sufficient as soon as possible: ‘[t]hus with industry and economy it should be possible for a man to maintain his family in comfort and achieve his independence before infirmity of years could overtake him.’²¹⁵

The two ideas of self-sufficiency and a stratified community were important features in Wakefield’s plan for New Zealand. While earlier settlements showed promise, they all fell short of his vision, some like Nelson and Taranaki, with disastrous results. Reflecting on these failures Wakefield ‘decided that religious cohesion had been the missing ingredient’,²¹⁶

²¹² Edmund Bohan, “Godley, FitzGerald and the Ideals of Pilgrim Canterbury,” in *Remembering Godley*, ed. Mark Stocker (Christchurch, New Zealand: Hazard Press, 2001), 42.

²¹³ Steven Eldred-Grigg, *A New History of Canterbury* (Dunedin: John McIndoe, 1982), chapter heading.

²¹⁴ New Zealand Natives Association – Canterbury Branch, *Canterbury Old and New, 1850-1900 A Souvenir of the Jubilee*, (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1900), 84-85.

²¹⁵ McLintock, (1949), 245.

²¹⁶ Olssen 31.

and that its inclusion would 'ensure moral stability and earnestness of purpose among a young colonising community.'²¹⁷ While this may have been true, Bloomfield suggests Wakefield employed religious colonies 'as an artful dodge for taking the wind out of the Church Mission Society's sails.'²¹⁸

Carrington states that alongside Anglican and Presbyterian settlements, Wakefield also investigated settlements for Irish Catholics and Zionists.²¹⁹ Bloomfield says that he 'actually approached the Chief Rabbi with the idea of setting up a colony of Jews alongside the Anglican's Canterbury.'²²⁰ Temple quips that 'he would have transplanted the Grand Lama of Tibet' to get his colony.²²¹ While Wakefield had the inspiration to form settlements with a religious focus, he could not achieve his vision without support from the churches. The fact is that the two settlements under study eventuated was due largely to the commitment of the founders as well as a number of twists of fate rather than Wakefield's direct involvement.

Otago and Canterbury

As Otago and Canterbury were founded on religious principles by religious men, one would imagine that unlike the earlier settlements of New Zealand, which were focused largely on economic gain, they should have more philanthropic ideals at their core. However, while religion was a major point of difference, other factors also influenced their uniqueness. A major one was country of origin. Both Otago and Canterbury strived to keep their exclusiveness intact, although this was unable to be maintained for long. For example, in Otago there was open friction between the Free Church Scots and the 'Little Enemy' (the

²¹⁷ McLintock, (1949), 173.

²¹⁸ Bloomfield, 292, adding The CMS was emphatically against colonisation of New Zealand, fearing negative effects on Maori.

²¹⁹ Carrington, 58.

²²⁰ Bloomfield, 306.

²²¹ Temple, 418.

Anglicans). Thomas Culling recalled in later years having asked Capt. Cargill for a job to which Cargill was reported as saying: 'you are English are you not ... you've no business here. This is a Scottish settlement and is only intended for Scotch people ... Canterbury is the place for you.'²²² By the time influxes of 'others' arrived, a definite province-wide ethos had developed which saw Otago align itself strongly with Scotland, especially the Free Church branch of Presbyterianism; and Canterbury as a Church of England settlement. Historian, Erik Olsen, calls Otago a 'godly experiment',²²³ and indeed it was seen by its founders as an expression of their commitment to the Free Church, especially as it occurred so close to The Disruption. There was no missing the focus in Otago's *Scheme of the Colony of the Free Church at Otago*, which ponders 'to what benefit do men struggle and spend all their time working and getting very little for it and not have enough time to contemplate God? It is not their lot, if they can lawfully escape from it.'²²⁴

However, there were a number of other factors that encouraged the largely Scottish migrants to Otago; two important ones were poverty and unemployment.²²⁵ 'In some parts of Scotland as many as a quarter of the population was out of work'²²⁶ and suffering extreme want. Therefore the majority of settlers came not from the rural villages, as Wakefield wanted, but the heavily industrialised lowlands around Glasgow. 'People for whom the future offered little prospect of security were animated by the hope of a fresh beginning in a new country',²²⁷ [where there were] 'greater facilities of acquiring the necessities and

²²² A. H Reed, *The Story of Early Dunedin* (Wellington: A H and A W Reed, 1956), 51.

²²³ Bassett, 33.

²²⁴ Otago Association (1845). 11... 'but they must be careful ... first that their present hardships are not of their own making and then that the prospects of the change are good and rest on a solid foundation.'

²²⁵ A H Reed eloquently states: 'When economic crises in close succession drove the poor to distraction....when unemployment was rampant and poverty indescribable, when machinery had so reduced the value of labour that a workman might find himself starving in the midst of plenty ... when for thousands life was death and the future without hope. In factories and mines, in slums and tenements the springs of Otago history may be traced.' Reed, 19.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

conveniences of life and the higher rewards of labour and industry.’²²⁸ Such was the level of hardship there were two almost concurrent proposals for migration to New Zealand

The first scheme was more a vision than a proposal — with noble ideals, but lacking in detailed plans.²²⁹ The *New Zealand Journal* of 8 ‘February 1840 reported that a Paisley²³⁰— New Zealand Emigration Society had been constituted by several persons of respectability and influence whose intentions were that the emigrants should go forth as a moral and religious community.’²³¹ At one of the numerous meetings held by the group, a Dr Burns²³² foresaw that New Zealand ‘was destined to provide a noble field for settlement of the industrious artisans and labourers of Scotland who would carry abroad with them the arts, the literature and religion of Scotland.’²³³ This statement was more than enthusiastic rhetoric; what he envisaged was a community of common religion²³⁴ comprised of workers and tradesmen — not the poor.

The second scheme was founded by George Rennie. This was ‘aimed primarily at alleviating the distressed condition of the poor.’²³⁵ In July 1842, he approached the Board of Directors of Wakefield’s Company with a proposal that they establish such a settlement. While not Free Church specifically, he had as a top priority a church and a school. His first approach failed as the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners felt that any new settlement

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ But was similar to that of the West of Scotland Committee, formed in 1839. It was developed by such men as the Lord Provost of Glasgow and the Dukes of Argyle and Hamilton to encourage struggling inhabitants of their communities to migrate. They sent out one ship, the *Bengal Merchant*, to Wellington, but distance, cost ‘and not least the native problem’ [meant] New Zealand [did not] become the most attractive field for Scottish emigration’ McIntock, (1949), 156.

²³⁰ Paisley was especially affected by industrialisation and new methods of manufacturing textiles. Even changes in fashion, such as the going out of style of their famous shawls put many families out of work. For example, Henry Watson calico printer left due to unemployment in 1854. His first job here in New Zealand was boundary rider in an isolated area behind Herbert, North Otago.

²³¹ McIntock, (1949), 156-7.

²³² Not to be confused with Rev. Thomas Burns of the Otago settlement.

²³³ McIntock, (1949), 157.

²³⁴ At that time it meant the established Presbyterian Church.

²³⁵ McIntock, (1949), 159. McIntock states, p 158, that Rennie’s article in the *Colonial Gazette* of 17 August 1842 ‘may, with justice, be regarded as constituting the genesis of the New Edinburgh.’

should be near Auckland. Rennie, however, insisted that his settlement be on the east coast of the South Island, where there were few natives and the land and climate were suitable for grain production.²³⁶

Rennie made a second approach the following year. Unfortunately for him it took place just a week before The Disruption, and his plans were hijacked by the newly established Free Church.²³⁷ What had been an opportunity for tradesmen to better their lives and introduce the blessing of Scottish culture on a new land, transformed into a migration of a selected few that was compared to the Pilgrim Fathers leaving for America.²³⁸ Henceforth, New Edinburgh would not only be Scottish²³⁹ but almost exclusively Free Church.²⁴⁰ While the objective of the Association was to secure 'emigrants whose loyalty to the ... Church was beyond question,'²⁴¹ it was not always achieved. Many would-be settlers were swayed by the lure of a better life elsewhere. For example, Canterbury Association agents regularly boarded ships

²³⁶ So important was grain to the oat eating Scots that when the Otago settlement did go ahead and Governor Fitzroy tried to assign Port Cooper to them, their surveyor Tuckett saw 'the plains ... [with] their light soils and lack of timber' [that he suggested that] it was better suited to landed proprietors who need large acreage for grazing (i.e. the English). [In Otago, Tuckett found land] just what the promoters of the new Edinburgh scheme desired. [land]...that would attract a humble labouring class of emigrant from their Scottish homeland.', Temple, 365.

²³⁷ In a nutshell, The Disruption of 1843 saw a number of influential ministers, including Thomas Chalmers and Thomas Burns walk out of the General Assembly in protest against State invention in church affairs, and form the Free Church.

²³⁸ Captain Cargill said on the day of arrival: 'it is a fact that the eyes of the British Empire and I may say too Europe and America are upon us. The rulers of our great country have struck out a system colonisation on liberal and enlightened lines. And small as we are now we are the precursors of the first settlement which is to put that system to the test'. Reed, 34-5. See also McLintock (1949), 217 – 218.

²³⁹ Yet how Scottish was Otago? Reed, 36 states that of the first properties sold 84 properties were taken by Scots and 95 by English, no Scottish purchaser took more than 3 properties but of the English buyers one took 20 another 12 another 6 and several brought 4 each. Eighteen English buyers subscribed to the institutions and principals of the Otago scheme and that 27...made their purchases as investments. In October 1849 the population of Dunedin (and therefore Otago) was 745 64% Presbyterian, 22% Church of England, 1 each of Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Congregationalist and 92 were unidentified. Reed 51.

²⁴⁰ And why should not the faithful escape poverty together? W, Cargill, *Free Church Colony at Otago: Powers of Local Self-government Established by the Act of Parliament, and Other Privileges, Conferred upon the Colonists – the Removal of Every By-gone Obstruction, and a Free Call from the Authorities to Proceed with this Enterprise in a Letter from Capt. Cargill to Dr Aldcorn* [honorary Secretary to the Glasgow Committee of the Otago Association], of Oban, printed Waterlow and Sons, London, 1847. Hocken Pamphlets volume 29 item 5. '[The Association] did not intend to be unsettling the mind or exciting the ambition of a single individual who is contentedly and usefully located at home, but there are on average 4000 souls oozing out of Scotland. Free Church people are heading off in all places and settling in mixed communities when they should be drafted in a wholesome channel. People sacrifice their souls in emigration and those of their children, if not so here elsewhere.'

²⁴¹ McLintock, (1949), 346.

heading for Otago and ‘poached’ migrants for their colony, ‘by giving them the most fearful accounts of the place and climate.’²⁴²

McLintock states that the group that went out ‘did not even remotely form a colony in Wakefield’s conception of that term. ...By no stretch of the imagination, or well-meant distortion, did they represent a complete segment of its society since ... they were drawn almost entirely from the poorer classes of a community whose qualifications for the sterner task of founding a colony were tragically inadequate.’²⁴³ Burns agrees, saying Otago was ‘not representative of a true cross section of society including as they did only a few of a higher grade.’²⁴⁴ Brooking, not surprisingly, refutes this slight and states that ‘Otago was a variant’²⁴⁵ of a Wakefield settlement that differed from, but was not inferior to Canterbury. He says that Otago came closer to realising Wakefield’s principles, including ‘his preindustrial vision of social order based on church and family.’²⁴⁶

The *Otago Journal* [The Association’s mouthpiece] of June 1848 stated: ‘The community of Otago will be select and all the graduation of home society will have fitting representatives.’²⁴⁷ Selection indeed there had been but it was based more on evidence of religious suitability than rugged qualities characteristic of pioneering endeavour. While the Otago Settlement wanted to attract the hard working men required to make the new Eden, they also sought to harvest souls for the afterlife. The *Scheme of the Colony of the Free Church at Otago in New Zealand* extended ‘a solemn invitation’ to ‘the poorer and humbler classes’ for ‘them to enlist as emigrants for their children’s, if not their own, sakes. Was it not their duty ... to seek an escape from their uncertain situation ... so absorbing as almost to

²⁴² ‘While the settlements in the north received their immigrants in the thousand, Otago had to be content with but a handful. For a period of 15 months ending March 1852, 246 immigrants arrived in Otago while 114 departed.’ McIntock, (1949), 346

²⁴³ McIntock, (1949), 234.

²⁴⁴ Burns, 294.

²⁴⁵ Brooking (1997), 127.

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ *Otago Journal*, June 1848, 18.

exclude from their minds all thoughts of that eternity to which they were fast approaching. ...Clearly it was duty to escape from circumstances which threatened to destroy their immortal souls.²⁴⁸ For all the rhetoric however, the Otago Scheme was not popular with Free Church adherents.²⁴⁹

Dr Chalmers' influence on Otago

However whatever shortcomings those who came to New Zealand may have had, they possessed a strong belief in self-help rather than relief, and a systematic method of community care devised by one of the leaders of the breakaway church – Dr Thomas Chalmers. Chalmers believed that the government had no role in the relief of the poor; it was, instead, a matter for the community.²⁵⁰ Both John Wesley and Chalmers believed that charity should only come from the heart. ‘It is beyond the power of legal institutions to administer effectual relief to the poverty and wretchedness of the lower orders.’²⁵¹ Chalmers believed that relief based on compulsory assessment was doomed to failure for four main reasons:

- ‘The poor became systematically trained to expect relief as a right, thereby destroying the connection between economy and independence and improvidence and want.
- Neighbours and kindred lose their private sympathies and abstain from providing relief. (This certainly was the case in New Zealand after the 1885 Act.)
- As the number of poor increases they will be less comfortably relieved since the allowance per pauper tends to decrease.

²⁴⁸ Quoted by McLintock, (1949), 211. ‘Yet they would not be fleeing from refuge to the wilderness for they would emigrate to a settlement provided from the outset with a church and Christian ministry.’ Indeed, Dr Burns considered the settlement ‘at one with the divine plan for the regeneration of mankind.’ *ibid* 215.

²⁴⁹ McLintock (1949), 234 – 235.

²⁵⁰ Checkland, (1980), 61.

²⁵¹ Furgol, 118.

- An artificial system tends to be wasteful; both in terms of increased expenditure on paupers caused by their demands for relief as a legal right and by the increase in the number of individuals needed to administer relief.’²⁵²

Chalmers compelled the poor to stand on their own feet. This was especially important when parish funds were denied to members of the Free Church (‘wee frees’) after The Disruption. He believed the poor should be given the kind of neighbourly supervision and assistance that would develop in them qualities of self-reliance and independence, important traits in the Free Church.

Chalmers spent twelve years in rural Fifeshire where his flock ‘unspoilt by an English Poor law ... maintained themselves in industry and virtuous independence.’²⁵³ Chalmers was no theorist. To prove his point he convinced the Glasgow Town Council to establish a new parish in the poorest area of the city, with him as minister. Within four years he had improved the living and social standards of the parish and its inhabitants. ‘At St John’s, Chalmers [could claim] success in that by a combination of mutual aid among the poor, plus parish charity, together with the advice and surveillance of the deacons, the parish could look after its own poor without an assessment for poor rates and without subvention from the city.’²⁵⁴ ‘Parishes could be divided into smaller proportions [with] one elder and one deacon [who] would be responsible for each proportion. They would know their poor, receive applications for aid, investigate the moral and material conditions of the applicants and foster frugality, piety and industry through godly preaching.’²⁵⁵

²⁵² Checkland (1985), 131.

²⁵³ Englander, 225.

²⁵⁴ Checkland, (1985), 130. While a parish based system was an efficient means to administer relief, it was liable to be used as a means to control the less enthusiastic church goers. For example, Arnold, 245 quotes early Auckland settler, Stephen Rout: ‘I can fancy old Bowsey slipping about from door to door asking who was at church last Sunday, if they were not — no blanket or soup, nor yet any coals.’

²⁵⁵ Olssen, 32-3.

This idea of a care network was imported to Otago. Dr Thomas Burns, religious leader of the fledgling community, made regular visitations to each household, but he also required his elders to visit clusters of families on a more frequent basis. Not only could church attendance and matters of religion be discussed but, by becoming closely involved in their district, elders could ensure the right support was given when it was needed. This help often involved fellow church members.

For Chalmers, ‘the ultimate source of social distress lay not in external conditions but in the individual character. It was human weakness, he believed, not the organization of society that was at fault.’²⁵⁶ To improve the lot and character of the poor, the poor law had to be removed. Chalmers’ views and the way aid was administered in Otago was constantly promoted as a much better method of management than could be found elsewhere. Added to this almost a fanatical nationalism,²⁵⁷ the Otago settlement was bound to have a philosophical foundation very different to the rest of New Zealand.²⁵⁸ It went without saying that the Church’s settlement would be superior to other, secular inspired, migrations. John McGlashan, secretary of the Otago Association, stated that the object of Otago was to ‘establish a colony whose peculiar features would counteract the evils which have arisen in other colonies from the heterogeneous mixture of all creeds and persuasions.’²⁵⁹

Being a new expression of faith in a new land it was only natural for this new religious community to not focus solely on doctrine and ecclesiastical matters. Given that the Otago

²⁵⁶ Chalmers, 225.

²⁵⁷ For example, Rennie’s second approach to the Company’s directors stated that Otago should be Scots only as ‘the great majority of the emigrants [to New Zealand, thus far]... were of English stock and that the Scottish people had played a relatively unimportant part in an enterprise for which they were eminently qualified by reason of their self-reliance, industry, perseverance and prudence.’ McLintock, (1949), 167.

²⁵⁸ ‘Otago being the latest of the existing settlements in New Zealand, its scheme embraces all the improvements which an enlightened experience derived from a close and superintending attention to the working of the schemes of the earlier settlements has been able to devise. It may therefore be justly said of the Otago scheme that it embodies the most perfect and complete practical system of emigration which experience and sagacity have yet discovered.’ *Otago Journal* November 1848, 34.

²⁵⁹ McLintock, (1949), 228.

leaders were either churchmen or heavily entrenched in the Church,²⁶⁰ social problems, such as unemployment, and poverty became merged in a rather strange blending of spiritual and economic factors. While some of the poor viewed poverty as their lot, pre-ordained by God (harkening back to the 'holy poor' of old), others believed that they had a duty to alleviate their position using God's gifts and opportunities.²⁶¹

McLintock states that the 'Wee Free's' were similar in intensity and commitment to their cause as the Wesleyan revivalists in England. Their initial fervour was 'later toughened in fibre by the hardships and suffering that in many instances were its accompaniment.'²⁶² One aspect where the two sects differed however, was that the Frees did not see pride as necessarily a negative thing. While much was propaganda in an attempt to get more migrants, writings concerning the settlement were awash with hyperbole, concerning the settlers,²⁶³ the Scheme,²⁶⁴ and even Otago itself.²⁶⁵

²⁶⁰ For example, Capt. Cargill who many call the settlement's Aaron to Burns' Moses (e.g. Ernest Northcroft Merrington, *A Great Coloniser: The Rev. Dr. Thomas Burns, Pioneer Minister of Otago and Nephew of the Poet* (Otago Daily Times and Witness Newspapers Co. Limited, 1929). <http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/MerGrea-fig-MerGreaTit.html> accessed 5 May 2013), 278.) was tutored by Thomas Chalmers himself when he was a young theology student.

²⁶¹ For example the Scheme of Otago, 11 states 'a man is no more morally bound to remain in a situation beset with harassing difficulties, of a merely temporal kind, than he would be if cast by the Providence of God on a savage and desert island to remain there if he could get away from it.'

²⁶² McIntock, (1949), 171. 'No sacrifice was too much, no hardship too great for the humblest followers of the Free Church, who showed their zeal for the cause by drawing on their hard won savings to ease the financial embarrassments that beset many of the new congregations.'

²⁶³ 'Piety rectitude and industry will pervade all classes and that evil doers restrained by public opinion and finding none of the opportunities of vice which a different condition of society affords will either leave the settlement or impressed with the advantages which it liberally tender to industry and morality will melt into the mass of respectable colonists.' McIntock, (1949), 229. And, if they didn't fit in, or began to complain, they could always been relocated. It was perhaps fear that festering discontent would persist in the colony that forced Cargill within a few weeks of arrival to ... promptly ship ... '18 useless grumblers' (chiefly picked up at London, [so not really Scottish at all!] ... [to Wellington]. McIntock, (1949), 249.

²⁶⁴ 'The chief features of this scheme are its provisions for bringing into vigorous operation principles including: capital and labour in due proportions, selection instead of a chance collection of emigrants, concentration instead of an injurious and unnecessary dispersion of settlers, instruction and civilisation instead of ignorance and barbarism.' ... The New Zealand Company is a highly influential body at first associated for colonizing purposes without any view to private or pecuniary gain [and the Free Church] includes many distinguished and influential members of the church noted for their philanthropy patriotism or general talent and business habits.' *Otago Journal*, November 1848, 34. 'Concentration is synonymous with co-operation, but dispersion is isolation.' Ibid, 35.

²⁶⁵ 'The climate to a British constitution is the finest and healthiest in the world', *Scheme of the Colony of the Free Church at Otago*, 7 '... and no local or epidemic diseases, indeed ague has never appeared', ibid 17.

When the first group of settlers were ready to embark, the Association claimed that they had been ‘selected with great caution after careful scrutiny [and were] composed of highly intelligent and respectable individuals in the vigour of manhood, full of energy and enterprise. [They were] supported by the production of the most satisfactory testimonials as to character and blameless life. [None of the] labouring classes [were] admitted as free emigrants without evidence of their possessing proficiency in his calling, habits of industry and temperance and moral and religious excellence.’²⁶⁶ ‘The colony would be compromised of godly, industrious working class families as well as small capitalists.’²⁶⁷ There was little room for the poor and needy. To ensure they were unlikely to require aid, those selected for the settlement were ‘the fittest in point of age, character and skill. [There was] an equality of sexes ... trades or professions to supply the varied wants of the settlement’, including increasing the population.²⁶⁸ It was important that the chosen migrants were self-sufficient, as funds were limited in the colony, so relief was unlikely to be readily available.

Naturally, like other settlements in New Zealand, it was assumed that Otago was so full of opportunity that there would be little reason for charity or want. Certainly, ‘in the very early days of the Province of Otago, poverty, in the strict acceptance of the term, was unknown.’²⁶⁹ However, the first immigrants were by no means affluent. They were ‘simply a body of respectable and industrious people who had the hardihood to launch out from the crowded home of their fathers to make for themselves a home in the Britain of the South and who had at least a sufficiency of the necessities of life.’²⁷⁰ Publications such as the *Otago Journal* were full of glowing reports of the opportunities in the new colony, letters ‘Home’ told of

²⁶⁶ McLintock, (1949), 229.

²⁶⁷ *The Scheme*, 13.

²⁶⁸ *Otago Journal*, November 1848, 35. The best candidates were young couples, and adults who were, generally speaking above 14 but below 40, *ibid*.

²⁶⁹ J.A. Torrance, *Picturesque Dunedin: or Dunedin and its Neighbourhood in 1890* (Dunedin: Mills, Dick and Co. 1890), 183.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*.

success and plenty. However they also were suggesting the type of person that would succeed and therefore was encouraged to come to Otago. One printed letter addressed to friends back Home stated that if they were considering migration they needed to engage in self-examination. 'Am I a person of such energy and activity that I may responsibly expect to succeed in a new colony? Can I make up my mind to bear with many inconveniences to put up with losses, privations and disappointment?',²⁷¹

Otago may have been full of opportunity, but times were still hard, McLintock says 'the lot of the poor was exceedingly hard and the struggle for existence a desperate one.'²⁷² However, while the settlement may have encouraged self-reliance, they did provide aid to those in need such as 'alleviating persons suffering from chronic diseases, non-admissible patients to hospital, convalescents recovering from lengthened illnesses, unfortunates deprived for a time of work and subjected to temporary distress',²⁷³ women deserted by their husbands and children by their parents.'²⁷⁴ Not only were they willing to help out, they were prepared; £500 had been brought out in various denominations on the *John Wickliffe* for relief.²⁷⁵

The settlers also supported each other²⁷⁶ — just as Chalmers had encouraged. Funerals were paid for by subscription,²⁷⁷ distress caused by illness, 'accident or death were readily met by the kind of tacit brotherhood and the neighbourliness that then characterized the

²⁷¹ 13 September, 1849.

²⁷² McLintock (1949).251.

²⁷³ On January 1849, only a few months after the first arrival, 'the first Otago organised labour demonstration took place. Unskilled labourers seized the opportunity of a visit of William Fox, the New Zealand Company's representative at Wellington, to voice their grievances. They complained that the rent of four pounds a year for the use of a quarter acre section left them with scarcely enough to supply their barest necessities'. Reed, 42.

²⁷⁴ Such cases were cited as reasons why Dunedin needed a benevolent institution by the *Otago Daily Times* 8 February 1862, quoted in Torrance, 186-7.

²⁷⁵ Reed, 38 states £100 in gold, £350 in silver and £50 in four penny pieces.

²⁷⁶ As well as the wider community. Subscriptions were raised 'for the relief of sufferers of the Taranaki war', Reed, 156. And even the widows and children affected by war with Russia and the Indian mutiny, 'Dunedin, though perhaps canny in money matters, quite early in its history earned a reputation for philanthropy', 141. However, they were keen to keep their hard earned money in their own pockets, to do with as they pleased; they protested strongly about their taxes going to Auckland, see p.96.

²⁷⁷ Reed 60. The 'Session administered godly discipline, guarding the moral and material welfare of all members of the congregation ... granting aid where necessary', Olssen, 39.

community.²⁷⁸ Rev Chisholm in writing the history of the Presbyterian Church in Otago spoke of:

the hearty response made to any appeal on behalf of the destitute. The spirit of liberality begotten at the Disruption and the habits of giving afterwards were easily quickened. There was little ready money in the community, but each one gave according to his ability and though the individual contributions were not large, the aggregate amount was by no means contemptible.²⁷⁹

This philosophy worked well in the fledgling community, but by the 1860s Otago's population had risen to about 3,000 and it was no longer possible to be acquainted with the circumstances of the citizens, as Chalmers suggested.²⁸⁰

By the time the provinces had been established relief became more organised. 'With the object of enabling succour to be given in every case of need, the Provincial Council made a grant for benevolent purposes with the suggestion that it be administered by the ministers and contributions should be invited from congregations.'²⁸¹ This is reminiscent of how aid was administered in Scotland—parish based and with its administration very much community led. Indeed, The Otago Benevolent Society owed its existence not to Government philanthropy but to local citizens. In Otago, 'the arrangement was similar to that found in some Australian states, where a single dominant voluntary society distributed aid with partial assistance from government subsidies, but largely without government interference. Otago politicians such as Julius Vogel were well acquainted with conditions in Victoria; the Australian colony with the

²⁷⁸ Torrance, 184.

²⁷⁹ James Chisholm, *Fifty Years Syne: a Jubilee Memorial of the Presbyterian Church of Otago* (Dunedin: J Wilkie and Co., 1898), 103.

²⁸⁰ 'At one time, when everyone knew every one, it was felt to be a privilege, rather than otherwise, to offer assistance in time of misfortune. But now, when men are mostly strangers to their nearest neighbours—when each one endeavours to jostle the others in the race after fortune's favours.' *Otago Daily Times* 8 February 1862, quoted in Torrance, 186.

²⁸¹ Reed, 158.

most extensive charity network, and when the Otago Benevolent Society was founded, its rules were modelled upon its Melbourne counterpart.²⁸²

In 1862,²⁸³ A C Strode²⁸⁴ wrote an anonymous letter to the *Otago Daily Times* stating that a Benevolent Society should be formed — its objective to be ‘the relief, after proper inquiry, of cases of distress.’²⁸⁵ The first meeting of the Society was 24 April 1862 (with Mr Strode in the chair). Its objectives were ‘to relieve the aged, infirm, disabled, or destitute of all creeds and nations, to minister to them the comforts of religion by relieving and maintaining in a suitable building such as may be most benefited by being inmates of the Asylum. [They also provided] out-door relief to families and individuals in temporary distress, afforded medical assistance and medicine through the establishment of a dispensary. [They also afforded] facilities for religious instruction and consolation to the inmates of the Asylum.’²⁸⁶

The Otago Benevolent Society provided out-relief to, on average, 50 cases per week,²⁸⁷ until a suitable premise was found. This building, in Caversham, was funded by private donations²⁸⁸ as well as grants from the Provincial Government.²⁸⁹ It gave aid to children (unruly, neglected and orphaned) as well as needy adults: the aged, infirm and unmarried mothers. It also continued to provide outdoor relief for the able poor.²⁹⁰ The Society tried to help any person with a ‘demonstrably genuine need and a sound character.’²⁹¹ Those of bad

²⁸² Tennant, (1989), 20.

²⁸³ 6th January.

²⁸⁴ Alfred Strode was at various times head of Police in Otago, Resident Magistrate and Member of the Legislative Council.

²⁸⁵ Editorial, *Otago Daily Times*, 25 April 1862.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ Torrance, 189.

²⁸⁸ Torrance, 195 makes special mention of the fact that the very wealthy made few if any contributions, and most came from the middle class or organisations.

²⁸⁹ Of the £3,114 7s. 2d spent to buy the property and erect the first buildings, the Council provided £1,500. Torrance, 183.

²⁹⁰ ‘Public Meeting at the Octagon’, 16 August, 1864, the *Otago Daily Times* reported ‘1000 men unemployed’ (not including ‘loafers’). The unemployed believed they had a right to relief and that the Government should be the provider. After all, the Government was involved in the promotion of New Zealand as a migrant destination.

²⁹¹ Olssen, 88

character went to the hospital, or the asylum or prison.²⁹² As the name implies, while based in Dunedin, it acted as refuge, in name at least for the entire province.

All of Otago's children, including those from Oamaru, were sent to the Industrial School in Dunedin. In most cases relief was given by the Society rather than the Provincial Council. However, in 1864 the Council began to support the 'ragged school'²⁹³ which had been established by a private citizen the year before.²⁹⁴ In the 1870s the Society was raising between £1500 — £2000 annually from subscriptions, collections and donations. To this was added a Provincial Council pound for pound subsidy. The creation of the Industrial School and the Benevolent Institution reflected the grudging admission of government that certain social problems could not be dealt with by churches, families or neighbourly help. 'Destitute old people and children aroused concern not merely because they were helpless but because they came to be seen as sources of social disorder and moral contamination.'²⁹⁵

As the *Otago Daily Times* pointed out while in England a poor rate provided relief, Otago had 'revenue in excess' some of which could be used to support the less fortunate in the community.²⁹⁶ Otago's Provincial Council, and later the central government, provided the hospitals and industrial schools common to most provinces; however Otago was also the province in which 'voluntary charity was most firmly established.'²⁹⁷ Tennant suggests that 'although Otago had money to provide aid, the Scottish background of many leading settlers may also have fostered voluntary effort. The Scottish Poor Law, more than the English,

²⁹² Originally, lunatics were housed in the prison and even when an asylum was constructed it was judged to be 'little better than a goal' by the Inspector of Hospitals and Asylums in 1876. While many 'lunatics' were cured by little more 'than rest and good food.' Dr MacGregor (at that stage Professor of mental and moral philosophy at the University of New Zealand in Otago) considered that Britain was deliberately sending out inferior people and New Zealand was accepting them. Olssen 86.

²⁹³ 'The idea of ragged schools was developed by John Pounds, a Portsmouth shoemaker. In 1818 Pounds began teaching poor children without charging fees.'

<http://www.maybole.org/history/articles/historyofraggedschools.htm>.

²⁹⁴ According to Torrance, 199 a Mrs O'Rafferty established the first school in St Andrew Street.

²⁹⁵ Olssen, 87.

²⁹⁶ 24 April 1862, cited in Torrance, 187.

²⁹⁷ Tennant (1989), 20.

emphasised voluntary giving, in association with public relief, by allowing for a parish fund based on donations and legacies as an alternative to the poor rate.²⁹⁸ Tennant proclaims that ‘although the Otago Association was local in scope, its persistence and the ideals it represented gave it a national significance.’²⁹⁹ Key figures in the New Zealand administration and provision of aid, such as Robert Stout and Duncan MacGregor had strong Scottish / Otago connections.³⁰⁰

As the years passed, the small caring community began to dissolve. Not only were people less likely to be involved in the Church — and therefore excluded from the sphere of its care, but many people were itinerant and without family, so even this New World town confronted problems of disorder akin to those of the ‘Old World.’ Naturally, Otago was able to provide succour due to the massive income they obtained from the gold rush.³⁰¹

Canterbury and Godley’s Vision

Although neighbouring Canterbury obtained sizeable amounts of money from the West Coast gold rush, it was not as prosperous as Otago. It also had a slightly less philanthropic philosophy. Like Otago, Canterbury was essentially a church settlement. Unlike Otago this was to be very similar to the English home the immigrants had left. The members of the Canterbury Association hoped to create a new, better, England.

²⁹⁸ Ibid.

²⁹⁹ Ibid. For example, the 1867 *Neglected and Criminal Children Act* was a result of a similar act passed by the Otago Province, according to Sutch, (1969), 67.

³⁰⁰ Dr MacGregor came to New Zealand as a University of New Zealand (in Dunedin) lecturer, later he became Inspector-General of Asylums and Hospitals; and Robert Stout, his pupil became Premier of New Zealand.

³⁰¹ Gold was discovered by Gabriel Read in 1861. Torrance, 185 states that strange as it sounds, ‘grim want’ did not really visit Otago until the gold rush. Many of the new arrivals were penniless, unsuited for colonial life and families or wives left deserted by the bread winner.

As early as 1843, a Church of England settlement in New Zealand was being suggested by Wakefield's Company. Although Wakefield 'conceded he was a lapsed Quaker who wore his conversion to Anglicanism lightly',³⁰² he claimed that in all probability New Zealand would be 'the most Church of England country in the world.'³⁰³ In *Letter 24 from the colonist*, Wakefield expressed surprise that of all the denominations, the Church of England had such little impact in New Zealand — indeed it came last after Wesleyans, Presbyterians and even Catholics. 'Considering the numbers and wealth of her people at home and her vast influence accordingly, he could offer no excuse for neglecting her colonial people, save that in consequence of her connexion with the state, she is subject to the Colonial Office and therefore devoid of energy and enterprise.'³⁰⁴

As in Otago, one man's vision was responsible for establishing the philosophy behind Canterbury. In Otago it was Thomas Chalmers; in Canterbury John Robert Godley was the driving force behind the last settlement in New Zealand. While Godley has rightly been called the founder of Canterbury, it would not have eventuated without the guiding hand of Wakefield. Indeed, many historians believe that in Canterbury, Wakefield's true vision was finally achieved.³⁰⁵

Canterbury has often been described as his most successful settlement, in that it followed most closely his ideals. 'The Canterbury settlement represented the best in social and economic planning that Wakefield and his colleagues could offer. [It was] the nearest approximation to a Wakefield colonial nucleus in both homogeneity and numbers.'³⁰⁶

'Wakefield himself judged Canterbury to be the most successful of his settlements, both in

³⁰² Olssen, (1997), 49.

³⁰³ Temple, 418.

³⁰⁴ Wakefield, *The Art of Colonization*, 844.

³⁰⁵ Brooking, (1997), 123 states "Wakefield himself judged Canterbury to be the most successful of his settlements ... [and] ... most general histories ... have echoed this judgement'. Cookson, 35 agrees with this sentiment, using James Hight as an example.

³⁰⁶ Gardner, 62.

the general sense and closeness to his own theory.’³⁰⁷ Temple states that ‘Canterbury worked better than any other settlement [due] largely to the quality of the colonists that EGW had been at such pains to ensure.’³⁰⁸ Income from farming and the high sufficient price meant that Canterbury cleared its debts early and, unlike all other provinces, it ‘handed over to the central government a balance sheet free from debt.’³⁰⁹

The ‘success’ of Canterbury was aided by a fortuitous series of events. While Wakefield had his scheme and experience, the Company was falling into financial strife and despair. Personally, he suffered a stroke and became unable to inject the passion and energy required to revitalise the idea of emigration. He needed someone with those qualities as well as the right connections that would bring to his Company money and respectability. One could suggest that had Wakefield not fallen ill and needed to convalesce, he would not have had the time in his hectic schedule to meet up with Godley and focus solely on his Anglican settlement idea.

Although the plan was Wakefield’s, the execution of the Anglican settlement fell to Godley, who also had a definite vision. John Robert Godley was a member of the Irish ascendancy³¹⁰ and ‘deeply religious.’³¹¹ Unfortunately, says McLintock, ‘with all his fine qualities he lacked both tact and forbearance.’³¹² Carrington states that ‘Conway Rose, a Canterbury pilgrim of a good family, wrote home denouncing Godley as a dictator.’³¹³ ‘Godley vigorously attacked the fundamental principal of Whig thought – the derivation of power

³⁰⁷ Tom Brooking, “The Great Escape”, in *Edward Gibbon Wakefield and the Colonial Dream: A Reconsideration* (Wellington: The Friends of the Turnbull Library, 1997), 123 ‘The founding of Canterbury was according to the book: pure Wakefield theory translated into practice with almost pedantic exactness’. Bloomfield, 292.

³⁰⁸ Temple.479.

³⁰⁹ Carrington, 185.

³¹⁰ Although ‘Gladstone noted with approval was without a trace of ‘Irishness.’ Bohan, (2001), 38.

³¹¹ L C Webb, ‘The Canterbury Association and its Settlement’ in *A History of Canterbury, volume I: General history, to 1854*, eds. James Hight and C R Straubel (Canterbury Centennial Historical and Literary Committee, 1957), 135. To Godley, ‘the Church was the custodian of principle’s and truths’, *ibid*, 137.

³¹² McLintock, (1958), 309.

³¹³ Carrington.136.

from below.’³¹⁴ In other words, he approved of the order of things where the power came from those born to lead. Godley believed in people’s rights, but he believed that the poor were ‘too ignorant to be given the vote’; although he also believed that their superiors had a duty to prepare them for that right.³¹⁵

Like Chalmers, Godley’s ideas came from observation and practical experience and a desire to improve the lot of the poor. Godley believed that ‘the western world was near to final calamity and his hope was that civilisation would regenerate itself in the newer societies.’³¹⁶ Many of his views on emigration and settlement were based on his first-hand experience of the poor during the Irish Famine. In a rather hyperbolic statement, Carrington stated that ‘no man in Ireland had done more to overcome English complacency about the famine than Godley behind the scenes,’³¹⁷ and that he was ‘perhaps the only man alive who knew and cared about the two unrelated topics of responsible government for the colonies and a new life for the national Church.’³¹⁸ Hewland states that the Association’s aim was to ‘ensure a good, healthy Christian moral atmosphere in the colony, and not to persecute other religions.’³¹⁹ The Bishop of Norwich (a member of the committee of the Association) agreed saying that ‘they looked at the project as the means for training up a thoroughly Christian people’³²⁰ (he did not say specifically Anglican).

Certainly Godley assisted those in need on his estate in Ireland, for example, personally importing Indian meal to feed his starving tenants. However a telling incident recounted in Grainger states how he stumbled upon an elderly couple dying of starvation. While he was

³¹⁴ *A History of Canterbury, volume I*, 136

³¹⁵ See *A History of Canterbury Volume I*, p 137. This idea of ‘training’ the lower classes was transferred to Canterbury, where workers were expected to work for their betters until they had the necessary financial and social capabilities to be landowners on their own.

³¹⁶ *A History of Canterbury volume I*, 137.

³¹⁷ Carrington 48.

³¹⁸ Carrington 22. Although a number of historians point out that Godley was not bigoted against other faiths.

³¹⁹ J L H Hewland, “Early Canterbury as a Wakefield Settlement.” (M. A. Thesis Canterbury University College, 1932), 49.

³²⁰ Ibid.

sympathetic, he made no mention of providing them with nourishment, although he stayed until the frail old man died.³²¹ This exemplifies his compassion yet his lack of understanding of how to deal with hardship in a practical sense.

In 1840 Godley toured Ireland to investigate the social problems of the country. He encouraged the planned emigration of the Irish to Canada. Carrington states that Godley saw in Canada what he wanted for Canterbury: 'a self-reliant episcopal church in communion with the Church of England.'³²² He believed that everyone would benefit from the removal of a number of poor from the destitute land.³²³ The emigrants would have an opportunity to advance, those that remained behind too would have less competition and landowners who were faced with high poor law rates would have fewer mouths to support. Contrary to many of his peers, Godley was in favour of the Poor Law. He suggested a new Poor Law, 'sternly and justly administered and charged against the ... landlords, a policy of public works to create employment and (of course) emigration' as a means to assist Ireland.³²⁴

To expand his knowledge, Godley visited America and Canada to see how systematic emigration could work.³²⁵ Because of this, he was invited to speak to the Devon commission on Irish emigration to Canada. During the course of his research he came across Wakefield's ideas and was greatly impressed by them. In 1847, the Monteagle Committee was established to look into emigration, and Godley's scheme to encourage Irish peasants to move to Canada in particular. One of the witnesses was 'Captain Joseph Thomas who drew

³²¹ Steven Grainger "Church, Society and Imperial Mentalities, c. 1700 – 1870: The Political and Ideological Context of the Canterbury Association." (D.Phil. thesis, University of Sussex, 1997), 30.

³²² Carrington, 78.

³²³ While others might view this as another 'Clearance' Grainger, (1997), 51 couches it as 'a rapid artificial adjustment of the labour supply through demographic movement.' Certainly many landowners encouraged emigration in order to reduce poor taxes. For example, the Earl of Kilmorey, in County Down, Ireland, paid many of his tenants to leave Ireland because a small, 'one off' payment was thought more financially viable than a continued poor rate tax.

³²⁴ Carrington, 26.

³²⁵ Mirroring Wakefield's 'letter from Sydney', Godley wrote 'Letters from America' regarding emigration. In response, Godley's ally James FitzGerald wrote *Letter to Noblemen and Gentlemen of England* 'demanding relief for famine-stricken Ireland and wholesale transportation of Irish society to North America'. Bohan, (2001), 39.

attention to the possibilities of colonising the ‘empty’ southern island of New Zealand.’³²⁶ In yet another quirk of fate, along with Capt. Thomas, who later surveyed Canterbury for the Association, Edward Wakefield, (Edward Gibbon’s father) also attended the hearing.

About this time Godley became obsessed³²⁷ by the vision of ‘a colony settled on religious, moral and self-reliant lines’,³²⁸ comprised of fellow Anglicans. While this may have been Godley’s vision it was impossible to achieve given that before his settlement occurred there were the usual collection of sealers and adventurers, as well as the Pre-Adamites, such as the Presbyterian Deans family who had arrived in 1843. The largely Catholic French also began to settle in Banks Peninsula as early as 1838.³²⁹

Regardless, ‘Godley’s work in the world ... was to plant Canterbury with some of the very best kind of population in the world and to instil in them the doctrine of entire self-reliance.’³³⁰ Thomas Jackson, the nearly bishop of the infant settlement proudly boasted ‘in Canterbury the wines may be scanty but Milton and Homer may be invited to the board. Canterbury will not be a colony where slang will be substituted for conversation, where the English language has lost its nerve and purity where men drink and do not dress for

³²⁶ Carrington, 40. ‘Captain Joseph Thomas, [officer for the New Zealand Company and de facto agent for the Canterbury Association,] left England to select, survey and prepare the settlement of Canterbury’, (on July 6). C.R. Straubel, “Maori and European to 1850, in *A History of Canterbury volume 1*, eds. James Hight and C R Straubel (Christchurch: Canterbury Centennial Historical and literary Committee, 1971), 113.

³²⁷ For Godley ‘the success of the scheme became an interest that amounted almost to an obsession.’ Marr, (1947), 12.

³²⁸ Mark Stocker, “Introduction”, in *Remembering Godley*, ed. Mark Stocker. (Christchurch, New Zealand: Hazard Press, 2001), 9.

³²⁹ Sutch (1969), 42 claims that the province was comprised of 84% of English settlers (although of course they would not all be Anglican), compared with Otago which only had a Scottish content of 70%. Having said that he claims Taranaki had a higher percentage of Englishmen than Canterbury. Steven Eldred-Grigg, 20 however decreases this percentage even further insisting that only 56% were English and by the end of the 1870s 20% of foreign born migrants were Irish. (However, this should be qualified as at that stage Westland with its numerous goldfields and large enclaves of Irish communities was still part of Canterbury.) While these figures vary, sometimes greatly, what it does point out is that not every inhabitant of Canterbury was English. Coming from different countries these people could have had different expectations regarding the provision of aid.

³³⁰ Carrington, 144. Canterbury was the most successful of the provinces... [and even after the province] ‘gave up its independent in 1876 [it did not lose] its sense of superiority’ (John Cookson, “Image, Identity and Myth,” in *Southern Capital: Christchurch: Towards a City Biography 1850 – 2000*, eds. John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall. (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000), 22.

dinner,³³¹ Bishop Selwyn added that ‘the type of men required in the colony were those who can stand alone with no friend but their ever present Lord.’³³² While Godley certainly encouraged this sense of supremacy, outside the settlement this was seen as a flaw. In particular, Governor Grey, who held a personal antagonism towards Godley and by extension, his settlement, unhesitantly chided Canterbury, calling it the ‘ugly duck of New Zealand.’³³³ The *Nelson Examiner* printed a report that ‘Canterbury had been founded upon a mistaken notion of human excellence, chimerical and impracticable.’³³⁴

After hearing of Godley’s interest in migration, Wakefield issued an invitation to the young man. Godley and Wakefield met on 27 November 1847, and in ‘forty–eight hours Wakefield’s persuasive tongue engaged Godley in the cause of an Anglican church settlement.’³³⁵ Little delay was made in assembling a group of people with similar ideas and amassing information. In 1847 the plan for Canterbury was drawn up and published in March the following year; the same month the Canterbury Association held its first meeting.³³⁶

In May, Lord Lyttelton³³⁷ wrote to Governor Grey formally requesting authority to acquire a ‘million acres of land on behalf of a body of gentlemen who have constituted themselves an association for establishing a settlement composed of members of the Church of England.’³³⁸

On the 23 May 1848 Lord Lyttelton wrote to Lord Grey requesting a Charter of Incorporation as the Association wanted to be an independent body, rather than be dependent on the

³³¹ Carrington, 87. [Pember Reeves too ...] knew the founders ... to be a different class of pioneer [calling them] ... ‘English gentlemen and gentlewomen in the fullest sense of those ... words.’ O T J Alpers, Introduction to *The Jubilee Book of Canterbury Rhymes* (Christchurch: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1900), xv.

³³² James Spence, “The English Church in Canterbury, New Zealand 1843 – 1890.” (M.A. Canterbury University College, Christchurch, 1948), 33.

³³³ Spence, 24.

³³⁴ Bohan, 42.

³³⁵ Carrington, 59.

³³⁶ On 27 March 1848.

³³⁷ Chairman of the Association.

³³⁸ “Report to Court of Directors New Zealand Company” 30 March 1848 (Archives New Zealand, Wellington), R17053766. It was stated that the Company required 1 million acres to retain ‘that unity of a religious and educational character which is an especial feature of the settlement.’

assistance of the New Zealand Company and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. In his letter, Lyttelton referred to a discussion Eyre³³⁹ and Godley had with Grey regarding ‘granting a charter generally similar to those given to the companies who founded the early American colonies.’³⁴⁰ This implies the Association wanted autonomy for their new province. Grey replied that ‘it was neither possible nor advisable but it would be acceptable if the settlement became a distinct province.’³⁴¹

If Wakefield hoped Godley would provide an illustrious collection of supporters he must have been overjoyed with the Canterbury Association. ‘The first fifty members who subscribed their names to the prospectus were by far the most distinguished body of supporters to any colonizing plan since John Locke devised the utopian constitution of Carolina in 1668.’³⁴² The membership included the Archbishop of Canterbury (as president) plus a number of leading churchmen and Conservatives. Summarised, the list may be arranged into ‘clergy and philanthropist’.³⁴³ The Association published a prospectus offering 300,000 acres of land at ten shillings an acre with the proviso that the settlers would be obliged to pay an additional sum for subsidising immigration, providing roads and other works as well as church and school endowments.³⁴⁴ There was no mention of aid.

There can be no doubt that Canterbury was an Anglican settlement; the prospectus stated as much. ‘The colony is to be a Church colony and it is to be made especially suitable for emigrant churchmen. It is meant to develop a perfect system of church organisation.’³⁴⁵ ‘We intend to form a Settlement, to be composed entirely of members of our own church,

³³⁹ Lieutenant Governor Edward John Eyre.

³⁴⁰ Archives New Zealand (Wellington), C 473 362. Correspondence between Grey and Eyre and Co, Canterbury Association regarding settlement.

³⁴¹ Ibid.

³⁴² Carrington, 65.

³⁴³ Carrington 67.

³⁴⁴ Carrington, 60.

³⁴⁵ The Constitution of Canterbury (written by Henry Sewell 23 April 1852). “Canterbury Papers”, London: London: the Association for Founding the Settlement of Canterbury in New Zealand. Accessed 1 September, 2013 . http://anglicanhistory.org/nz/canterbury_papers1850.html.

accompanied by an adequate supply of clergy, with all the appliances requisite for carrying out her discipline and ordinances, and with full provision for extending them in proportion to the increase of population.³⁴⁶ The original intention had been to restrict the settlement entirely to members of the Church of England,³⁴⁷ but Lord Grey removed that clause from the Association's charter, although they were still given preference when applying for assisted passages.

'No one but a member of the Church was to be allowed to own land,³⁴⁸ and no one but an owner of land was allowed to take up a sheep run... No labourers were to be brought out at the general expense unless they were recommended by their parish priests as sound in faith and morals.'³⁴⁹ Land sold at £3 per acre, a lot more than the originally quoted 10s, and every land purchaser was obliged to pay a pound towards the ecclesiastical fund, which supported churches and schools.³⁵⁰

While Hickey states 'it is generally held that the [Canterbury] settlement was proposed as a sort of counterblast to that of the Free Church,'³⁵¹ the desire to establish a Canterbury settlement was more than religious competitiveness.³⁵² Amidst the hyperbole of the Canterbury Association, there were telling phrases which made it clear what Godley wanted.

³⁴⁶ Canterbury Papers, 6.

³⁴⁷ Unlike the other settlements, Canterbury was intended to be colonised solely by communicant members of the Church of England, Bloomfield, 294.

³⁴⁸ However, in 1851 Australian 'Shagroons' arrived and land had to be thrown open to everyone. Edmund Bohan, "Godley, FitzGerald and the ideals of Pilgrim Canterbury," in *Remembering Godley*, ed. Mark Stocker. (Christchurch, New Zealand: Hazard Press, 2001), 43.

³⁴⁹ Myrtle Roper, "The History of the Social Services of the Anglican Church in Canterbury." (M.A and honours, Canterbury University College, Christchurch, 1943), 5.

³⁵⁰ It was assumed that as people had to pay £1 to the ecclesiastical fund when buying land, non-Anglicans would not wish to be a part of the settlement. (While it may have been true, some, like some Catholic settlers, squatted rather than paying the extra pound.)

³⁵¹ Mary Margaret Hickey, "The Godley Period of the Canterbury Settlement." (M. A. Thesis Canterbury University College, 1915), 2.

³⁵² Captain Thomas was instructed to 'find a site with a good and commodious harbour, and in a district with few natives and as removed as possible from other settlements, so that it might be formed into a separate province,' according to Charles Torlesse (Charles Obins Torlesse, *The Torlesse Papers: the Journals and Letters of Charles Obins Torlesse Concerning the Foundation of the Canterbury Settlement in New Zealand, 1848-1851*, ed. Peter Maling (Christchurch: Pegasus, 1958), 15.

The Association spoke of the ‘new colony with its aristocracy, its yeoman farmers, its necessary tradesmen and its sturdy labourers [which] would form an epitome of English society.’³⁵³ ‘The colonists would enjoy a quiet and happy life where want is unknown, and listen from afar to the clamour of pauperism, to the struggle of the classes.’³⁵⁴ Grainger states the purpose of the Canterbury Association was to found an ‘Anglican’³⁵⁵ community of middle and gentry classes with an attendant body of labourers.’³⁵⁶ This statement is crucial to the understanding of charitable aid in Canterbury.

The two provinces compared

Otago and Canterbury were both religious settlements. Otago, however, comprised a relatively small sect, very recently established and composed largely of enthusiastic members from roughly similar backgrounds and social class. In the case of Canterbury, the religion was the majority (even official) denomination, well established over centuries and included the full gambit of society. Within the term ‘Anglican’ were many levels — from High (Anglo-Catholic), low and even, at the time of the settlement of Canterbury, Methodists and Wesleyans. It was, in short, a non-homogenous group.

‘Anglicanism’ had transcended the realm of religion and enveloped most aspects of English life including politics, social structure, culture and philosophy. A cohesive link between the various settlers was an acknowledgement, if not an inbuilt acceptance, of the mores and social construction of English Society under the guise of religion.

³⁵³ Roper, 4.

³⁵⁴ The Constitution of Canterbury, quoted in Roper, 5

³⁵⁵ Marr, 67- 8 states ‘There was the attempt to found Canterbury on an exclusive religious basis as a colony of Anglicans for Anglicans’. Yet ‘Godley showed no trace of exclusiveness. At an early stage he received deputations of Roman Catholics and nonconformists ... asking him to allot them ground for their chapels and cemetery which he promptly granted and was censured by [administrator Henry] Sewell for doing so.’ Carrington, 128.

³⁵⁶ Grainger, (1997), 1.

While Godley's form of Anglicanism had remained unchanged and largely unchallenged for many years, from the late 1700s some Anglicans were reappraising their religion and became involved in the Evangelical Revival. Some churchgoers supported their pew fellows going out and practicing their faith and questioning the well-established theories of class and equality,³⁵⁷ others clung strongly to the ideals of social structure and theology. It was to the poor of Canterbury's misfortune that most of the men involved with the founding of the settlement were of the second group.

Wakefield believed strongly in class stratification and Godley too was a conservative in every sense of the word. He did not believe in the new ideas of class equality.³⁵⁸ Not only was Godley upper class, he was also a Tractarian. This group, established at Oxford, saw a deliberate move towards a more theological based religion, and the ratification of social structure. An Anglo-Catholic, Godley concentrated on the ritual and liturgy of the Anglican Church more than "philanthropic Christians". He focussed on religious matters and people's souls rather than endeavouring to change the living conditions of the lower classes. His ideas were big picture and theoretical, rather than the more active and practical of the Free Church which was very "hands on" as far as social aid was concerned.³⁵⁹

So many members of the Canterbury Association were Godley's friends or acquaintances from Oxford or held similar ideas³⁶⁰ that 'some alarm'³⁶¹ was raised and 'safe'³⁶² churchmen

³⁵⁷ It is not surprising that it was the Anglican Church that became most involved with the debate on Darwin's theories of evolution. Not only did it challenge God's perfect plan but it challenged something very dear to their heart – the structure of society. If God could allow a monkey to turn into a man, why could he not enable a poor man to develop into a gentleman, and if that occurred what would happen to the upper class?

³⁵⁸ Godley said 'the age of equality is coming upon us and our business is not so much to struggle against it, with a view to repulse it altogether as to retard its progress and modify its effects.' Jim McAloon, "Radical Christchurch," in *Southern Capital: Christchurch: towards a city biography 1850 – 2000*, eds. John Cookson and Graeme Dunstall (Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, 2000), 162. In a speech to the Lyttelton Colonist Society on 30 June 1852 Godley stated 'for my own part I am no great admirer of, nor great believer in, the modern doctrines of equality' Godley, 114.

³⁵⁹ 'Canterbury was remarkable for unimaginative piety rather than zealotry'. Eldred-Grigg, 71.

³⁶⁰ [and therefore] ... 'popishly inclined', Carrington, 67.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Ibid.

were lobbied for support.³⁶³ For example, Godley wrote to his former tutor Lord Chancellor Palmer for ‘support for a colony stamped with a definite religious character formed not in order to get rich, but to live under congenial civil institutions.’³⁶⁴ ‘Godley sought to establish a society based upon the principles of the Christian religion; that is to say upon natural duties not natural rights.’³⁶⁵ There was an expectation that the rich would provide the same support and care for the needy in Canterbury as they had in England; however lack of funds and the absence of the very rich meant this did not occur.

Although they may have had noble intentions, many of the men, if not all who organised Canterbury, were ‘white waistcoated young ‘Englandism’,³⁶⁶ well educated, titled or at least moneyed or comfortable. Few even were of Wakefield’s uneasy class, and this thesis argues that therefore perhaps they found it difficult to factor provision for anyone requiring aid. One reason for including the necessary upper classes in Wakefield’s settlements was the prevalent idea that the rich had a moral duty to the poor. However as most of the “superior classes”: who migrated, even in Canterbury, were upper middle (with some exceptions, such as Godley himself) many were bereft of the *noblesse oblige* tendencies or financial resources of the true upper class, and therefore the poor had few champions to manage or care for them.

While in England, men such as Godley may have been responsible for large tracts of land and numerous tenants, but they did so with the aid of bailiffs and stewards. Grainger states ‘the division of labour within English high farming meant that many senior Canterbury Association committee men lacked practical experience of dealing with workers.’³⁶⁷ They had little first-hand experience of managing people. For example, emigration agent and close

³⁶³ Carrington, 68. In a like manner the President of the Association was chosen to be the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr Sumner).

³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Carrington, 6.

³⁶⁶ Grainger, (1997), 154.

³⁶⁷ Grainger (2001), ‘Godley and Canterbury: a Success Story?’ 33.

friend of Godley, James Fitzgerald, reported to the Association that he had ‘chosen some suitable emigrants: but I must not be depended upon as it is a function which I am very ill suited for.’³⁶⁸ Nor did they have the necessary information to work with. A number of advisors called upon the Society of Canterbury Colonists in London (a committee comprised of people who were actually going to Canterbury) — including men knowledgeable on land, education, religion, banking, birds, animals and plants to introduce. No one is recorded as advising how to provide aid on a budget.

Otago, on the other hand was established by men more intimately acquainted with distress and struggle, either personally or in a more hands on role (such as ministers). For example, Captain Cargill, the secular leader of Otago was a wounded soldier who often found providing for his large family a struggle. Ministers were often financially stretched and had a background of administering aid to others. As Scotsmen, they all had the experience of either administering or receiving relief at a parish level. English relief, on the other hand, was provided by civic or national authorities; the invisible and, in the 1850s, struggling ‘someone’.

‘The Canterbury Association incorporated a Tractarian and High Church view of social relations and community’³⁶⁹ — ‘a product of a tough business world.’³⁷⁰ ‘It was a measured response to the political status quo, the hard-headed product of social and economic concerns.’³⁷¹ As a Tractarian, a successful settlement in Godley’s eyes would be one based on existing social stratifications; ‘a slice of England from top to bottom.’³⁷² ‘The object of

³⁶⁸ Grainger, (2001), 33.

³⁶⁹ Grainger, (1997), 90.

³⁷⁰ Grainger, “Godley and Canterbury a success story?” 30.

³⁷¹ Grainger, (1997), 75.

³⁷² *The Times* 5 July, 1851, quoted in Temple, 449. It goes onto say ‘a complete sample of Christian civilization ... [who were making] a deliberate long, considered ... pilgrimage to a temple erected by nature for the good of all comers. ... The adventurers stepped on board British subjects with British failings, British associations and British habit They would carry to (their) landing place the British character.’ Temple adds there [was]

the Association ... was a superior order of society. [The Association was] not shovelling out a heterogeneous mass of people just to relieve [themselves], but furnishing, in due and well-adjusted proportion, all that conduced to the order and development of society. [They believed that] in the Canterbury settlement they would secure those advantages that make the life of an Englishman tolerable.’³⁷³

The Association did not concern itself with planning how to ensure the lives of the emigrants who fell upon hard times and difficulties would be made tolerable. However Carrington adds Christchurch was ‘burdened neither with a class of idle rich nor hopeless paupers. It had attained this happy state ... by pursuing the aims and maintaining the principles of its founders.’³⁷⁴ What the Association failed to comprehend was that by establishing the settlement they had taken on the role of the administration. It is not surprising that planning and practicalities were lacking in Canterbury when one considers that the Association did not even have clear title to much of the land it was offering and men like Fitzgerald were admitting that they were embroidering the truth regarding sales.³⁷⁵ Possibly this accounted for some of the difference between the two provinces. Otago already had a charitable aid system in place when it arrived, whereas Canterbury was to be an ideal society — where, like Camelot, accident and distress would not happen.

Canterbury was primarily designed for the upper and middle classes as settlers or founders’ but in order to succeed they needed labourers. Wakefield’s sufficient price, intended to fund assisted emigration and infrastructure, was also used to prevent poorer people in Canterbury buying land straight away, so that the majority were “indentured” for between 3–5 years.

‘something heroic and indeed very British about setting out for the far side of the world with such solemn and thoroughly organised intent.’

³⁷³ Grainger, (1997), 158.

³⁷⁴ Carrington, 186.

³⁷⁵ Fitzgerald said ‘for a long time we have been buttering our sales up with big words, enthusiasm for which we have no solid grounds’, Grainger, (1997), 160.

However, having a large population of dependant workers also meant a number of people who relied on others for their health and other care. While the poor were encouraged to emigrate to Canterbury, they were not assured immediate success and advancement. They were however, given hope in the form of generalities and theories, such as the management would be ‘responsible and compassionate; ... there would be no jobless labourers dumped on inhospitable shores.’³⁷⁶

Roper states that as the Association intended to keep Canterbury purely Anglican,³⁷⁷ it stressed that the Church must expect to take a share of social welfare work. Discussing the question of benevolent institutions the Association affirmed that there was a ‘direct connection between the Church and those institutions which most command popular sympathy. The Church must extend her influence and preserve that commanding position, which is aimed at as one of the prominent features of the plan.’³⁷⁸ Indeed, the Committee of the Association wrote to Godley in 1850 stating ‘works of money and charity are acts of religion and a church system would appear to be defective which did not afford scope and opportunity within her own domain for the exercise of these duties.’³⁷⁹ However, while men who did not emigrate to New Zealand may have been encouraging, even demanding, of Church sponsored relief in Canterbury, the actuality was less forthcoming.

Within the documents of the Canterbury Association there are no real discussions on how poverty or disaster would be combated or relieved. But the Canterbury Association was not

³⁷⁶ Grainger, *Who was Godley?* (2001), 24.

³⁷⁷ Roper, I. The Association stated their ‘ultimate object was a superior colony’, Spence, 11. ‘We have emphatically announced the grand principle that colonists have souls as well as bodies requiring nourishment’. Spence, 12. Interestingly, Spence, 24 reports that Bishop Selwyn was ‘disgusted with the poor provision for religion in Canterbury.’

³⁷⁸ Roper, I. She adds that ‘although the plans for an exclusively Church settlement went awry [it] played a major part in the colony’s development and its social services.’ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Roper, 103.

without compassion.³⁸⁰ They did consider the possibility of charity being required, although they also assumed that it would be limited to only a few, after all, they reasoned, had not those that might request aid been filtered out already?

One could sum up the differences between the two provinces in that the Free Church had an existing system for caring for its members when the expected requests for aid occurred (even bringing money to provide cash relief), while the Anglican settlement looked upon the poor and needy as liabilities for which they were unprepared. The founders of Canterbury looked upon the working class as important components in the construction of their settlement and naively assumed, or hoped, that little aid would be needed.

Throughout the formation of Canterbury, health care and things philanthropic were mentioned almost not at all and if so, often in relation to matters of money and prestige.³⁸¹ Even the criteria for assisted emigration were based on economic gain and success for the settlement, rather than benefits for those migrating, as these extracts from *the Regulations Observed in the Selection of Labourers Applying for an Assisted Passage*³⁸² to the Southern Province of New Zealand show:

- Those that they preferred were manual labourers working for wages — especially farm servants, shepherds, gardeners, domestic servants or in moderate numbers country mechanics and handcraftsmen. All adults had to be capable of working for wages (so they were imported as workers for the middle and upper classes). Unlike

³⁸⁰ As Fenwick, 32 says: ‘though the great majority of the pioneers of Canterbury were hardy and self-reliant, it was but natural that a percentage should find conditions unfavourable and should fail to attain that state of affluence that would have placed them beyond want. It is evident that fairly early in the city’s history there were some who had to throw themselves on the charity of their more successful neighbours.’

³⁸¹ Bennett, 13 explains that a small ‘hospital’ was built in Lyttelton in the early 1850s, the Provincial Council received land for a hospital in Christchurch. Matter of factly, Bennett said ‘the welfare of weaklings had a very low priority among the pioneering projects.’

³⁸² Two thirds of emigrants to Canterbury from 1853 – 1876 were assisted.

Otago, Canterbury was a largely financial proposition.³⁸³

- The settlers should ideally be young married couples, preferably with no children, and no family will be accepted with more than 2 under seven. (This is so both parents can be profitably working.)
- Following Wakefield's theory, there will be an equality of male and female. Single young women will not be accepted unless they are in the care of married relations, or employed by a cabin passenger. Similarly, single men will not be accepted except in numbers not exceeding single women. The Canterbury Association wanted breeding couples capable of hard work.³⁸⁴
- They had to produce good character certificates.³⁸⁵

These regulations form part of the body of work entitled the *Canterbury Papers*, which are the foundation documents of the settlement. While they give the impression that the labourers were, as Grainger suggested, attendants to the real founders, another document makes it even plainer. Called *A draft law to encourage importation of emigrants*; it states: 'whereas it is expedient to encourage capitalists and others to import their own servants and dependants ...' Not only does it liken the settler's retinue of servants to cattle,³⁸⁶ it is devoid of the promises of new life or riches and improvement, common to most other emigration publicity.

³⁸³ Two forms, entitled notes on emigrants listed the occupations required in 1875. The original requested agricultural labourers, shepherds, carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, sawyers, gardeners, and domestic servants 'they must be sober, industrious of good moral character.' The later form excluded carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, sawyers.

³⁸⁴ No less than 14 and no older than 40. [Fitzgerald as agent hit the mark by saying] 'supposing even that there be not the opportunity for making large fortunes, the class of whom we speak do not aspire to make them, they would be satisfied with living in comfort and plenty, ... looking upon each additional child as an additional blessing instead of, as now, an additional burden.' Grainger, (1997), 134.

³⁸⁵ Every emigrant claiming assistance was required to produce a certificate of good conduct signed by the vicar of his parish and countersigned by a Justice of the Peace.

³⁸⁶ While this may sound inflammatory, others too thought this, for example, Emma Hodder who came out to Canterbury 'on the *Hydaspes* in 1869 believed that she and the hundreds of other assisted migrants were regarded as so many cattle', quoted in Grigg, 20.

Grainger states ‘the Association’s appearance in early 1848 was in no sense calculated to assuage immediate pressures by crudely propagandising a caring establishment.’³⁸⁷ Most advertisements focussed on the possible improvements in life in general,³⁸⁸ rather than specifics. It was this dealing with generalities and theories which left many missing out on care when required, at least in the Canterbury settlement. As there is no mention of healthcare nor relief in these papers, one can only assume that that was because it was not intended to be provided, except in extreme circumstances. While Godley and his associates may have ignored or overlooked the idea of charitable aid, many emigrants would have held the belief that as the settlement was a Church of England one (the Church of the establishment) relief, as at Home would be provided.

But care was not provided as it was at Home. Indeed, little organised aid was forthcoming although community giving was active. There was a form of reciprocal insurance where emigrants assisted each other with the expectation that if they should fall upon hard times they too would be supported. The closest the settlement came to organised aid was the Godley’s themselves. Carrington states that the “first family” was expected to look after those who found themselves in difficulties — ‘Mr Godley was expected to provide for them and Mrs Godley to mother them.’³⁸⁹ While Godley’s writing are full of comments which suggest that Charlotte Godley found this a burden, there is also the hint that Godley himself enjoyed this paternalistic role. Carrington, states ‘when the colony settled down to the hard

³⁸⁷ Grainger, (1997), 134. Although some Tractarian churchmen such as William Sewell (brother of Henry) did voice concern for the poor, suggesting “there are bad morals among the poor because of low wages, the demoralizing conditions of cottages the contamination of manufactories”, Grainger 131).

³⁸⁸ Contradicting comments made in his 1997 thesis, Grainger (Steven Grainger, ‘Remembering Godley: A portrait of Canterbury’s Founder’ In *Remembering Godley*, ed. Mark Stocker (Christchurch, New Zealand: Hazard Press, 2001), 24, he claims that the Canterbury operation was intended as a contrast to parallel colonising ventures; it would have responsible and compassionate management ... to a large degree these objectives were attained. However, was the lack of jobless labourers an indication of compassion and good management, or rather a promise that all well-chosen workers would be rapidly employed on arrival? He also asserts (1997,157) that ‘Canterbury ... was a philanthropic event in polite country society ... ’ However, his use of the term philanthropic is confined to discussing social improvement of the lower classes, rather than an active plan to care for them.

³⁸⁹ Carrington, 141.

task of pioneering, the settlers had less time for complaints ... they were content to leave everything for Godley's decision.'³⁹⁰ Although it may have been a practical arrangement to leave the visionary to create his settlement, when the Godley's left there was no clear deputy to take over the role.

While there is little evidence that Godley was lacking in compassion,³⁹¹ he did espouse the prevalent theory of the time of *laissez-faire*.³⁹² Combining that with Malthusian thought (which became entangled with Huxley's survival of the fittest) Godley was unlikely to be "soft" on those in need. Besides, Godley viewed class structure as a predetermined and acceptable situation. Grainger adds that 'the Tractarian view of poverty [was a] condition bestowed and favoured by Providence'³⁹³. This was contrary to the Otago view.

As in Otago, money was short and relief was low on the priorities for the new settlement. However, while other provinces might apply for aid from the General Assembly, Godley was unlikely to do so. He commented on Wellington's income from the Commissariat, denouncing it as 'an unhealthy artificial stimulus ... and [was] sure when withdrawn to produce a ruinous relapse.'³⁹⁴ Not only would he prefer to reduce relief and impose hardship on his fledgling community rather than ask for money, he would be unlikely to go cap in hand to Grey due to their mutual animosity.

And without money spent on aid, hardship was ever present, affecting not just the poor, but the comfortable. Grainger talks about 'genteel poverty'³⁹⁵ where people 'descend[ed] to the lowest occupations for the sake of economy [for example] ... the young ladies making muslin

³⁹⁰ Carrington. 135.

³⁹¹ Certainly his writings on experiences during The Famine in Ireland show him to have empathy at least. Grainger, *Godley and Canterbury: a success story?* (2001), 27 later states that those who champion Godley suggest that he was a 'pioneering altruist.'

³⁹² For example, Godley was often requested to intervene over prices of goods and labour, but he refused saying the market would sort itself out. Grainger (1997), 201.

³⁹³ Grainger, (1997), 100.

³⁹⁴ Grainger, (1997), 201-202.

³⁹⁵ Grainger, (1997), 200.

dresses ... and melting tallow candles for sale, ... gentlemen retailing potatoes [and] the clergy sending round their children with butter to sell.’³⁹⁶ While it might be acceptable to alter one’s standing of living during the period of adjustment to a new colony, real poverty was often unavoidable,³⁹⁷ and without an organised system of aid, could bring suffering and even tragedy to unexpected quarters.

Grainger cites the example of Reverend Kingdon who was ‘stranded on a tiny stipend’³⁹⁸ due to the questionable financial affairs of the bishop designate Jackson. Although the tender for a parsonage had been let, Jackson’s shortcomings meant that it had not been built and the newlyweds were forced to reside in a two room V hut. When Kingdon’s wife Sophia gave birth, their damp hut was seen as one cause for the baby’s death. This tragedy was soon followed by the death of Kingdon’s wife, which Grainger suggests was caused by not only ‘cold in their makeshift accommodation’³⁹⁹ but by the fact that Mrs Kingdon was ‘undernourished.’⁴⁰⁰ The poor of Canterbury must have been very concerned to hear of the death of a church family due to lack of care — what, therefore, could they expect from the Church founded administration?

Roper claims that the first decade or so of the ‘settlement was generally speaking prosperous.’⁴⁰¹ Such tragedies as the Kingdon’s were isolated, although preventative if there

³⁹⁶ Grainger, (1997), 200.

³⁹⁷ Adam Smith, (quoted in Michael Rose, *The Relief of poverty 1834 – 1914* (Basingstoke : Macmillan, 1986), 9.) said, ‘when one speaks of necessities of life I mean not only those commodities which are indispensably necessary for the support of life but whatever the custom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even of the lowest order, to be without.’ Poverty is therefore relative.

³⁹⁸ Grainger, (1997), 200.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid. George Theodosius Boughton Kingdon was Chaplain of the *Charlotte Jane* and incumbent of St Michaels.

⁴⁰¹ Roper, 69.

had been an established system of relief. 'Early writers remark on the comparative absence of crime⁴⁰² and poverty⁴⁰³ and on the industrious hard working habits of the working man.'⁴⁰⁴

Certainly men, and their families, had to be industrious. Not only was it the reason they were chosen by the Association as suitable candidates, but without poor relief the only way for the new migrants to survive was by hard work and perseverance. However, for those who were able and willing to work the early days of Canterbury were good. As Wakefield promised, labour was in short supply,⁴⁰⁵ labourers could earn between 27–30 shillings a week.⁴⁰⁶

However, with more and more emigrants arriving, the halcyon days were coming to an end for some and relief was more than neighbours could provide. Once both Otago and Canterbury were established, England took advantage of their need for labour and began to ship out far more needy people than Wakefield's system wanted or the meagre finances of the settlements could handle and a systematic means of caring for those in need was required. Somewhat apologetically, Marr states that it was 'scant resources that prevented the full application of the Association's plan',⁴⁰⁷ implying that lack of money and possibly the right people to administer it restricted charitable aid being provided in early Canterbury. Certainly the Association in England had envisaged the Church would play a leading role in providing for its members.

⁴⁰² Marr, 184 says that 'from a police point of view the settlement could not boast of any greater immunity from crime than the rest of New Zealand' but then goes on to state that most gaol inmates were sailors or Australian reoffenders (plus of course, debtors and mental patients).

⁴⁰³ Defining poverty in a new land with opportunities and possibilities is difficult. While it is true that the destitution of the old country – starving families and people living on the street or in workhouses was absent except in unusual circumstances, people still lacked money and food and lived in strained situations.

⁴⁰⁴ Roper, 69.

⁴⁰⁵ ... and became even more limited with gold strikes in Victoria in 1851, then of course Otago and later Westland.

⁴⁰⁶ *History of Canterbury Vol. 2, 7*. Sourcing labourers was so troublesome that it was suggested that Chinese coolies be imported. Instead, Australian workers were brought over for temporary works, such as in 1855 when navvies from Melbourne helped construct the essential Sumner Road. *History of Canterbury*, Vol, 2, 54-55.

⁴⁰⁷ Marr, 136.

Roper quotes the Association as saying:

[they] fully realised the part social welfare work and benevolent institutions must play in the settlement. The committee desire in the institution of this, a church colony, to restore what appears to them an integral part of the true idea of the church, not indeed by way of monopolising the field of benevolent action or excluding the foundations of like institutions by other hands, either private or public, but as taking the lead in this as in all other good works, and fulfilling at all events on her part, an admitted duty.⁴⁰⁸

Yet it would seem that once the churchmen arrived, such ideals were subservient to the visible goals of building churches, parsonages and schools.⁴⁰⁹ Perhaps this slowness to respond⁴¹⁰ was due in part to difficulties obtaining a suitable Bishop, a man who would lead his flock in caring for those who required it. Certainly the Church became far more active in philanthropic work with the arrival of Bishop Harper.

However one cannot help consider this lack of aid was also due to the same oversight that had plagued the provision of relief since Godley created his plan. Proving that perhaps it was not lack of resources but lack of thought, Marr agrees that ‘with the 1853 formation of the Provincial Government there was greater charitable activity.’⁴¹¹ It seems unlikely that within a few short months money was found to plan institutions such as hospitals, where before there were none.

In the later part of the 1850s however, the Church did begin, often in conjunction with the Provincial Government, to fund or at least support the establishment of such institutions as an orphanage and female refuge. Ironically, the prime workers in the field of church philanthropy were Reverend Henry Torlesse, and from 1885, his sister Fanny. They

⁴⁰⁸ Roper, 7 – 8 and Marr 125- 6 both quote *Canterbury Dispatches*, 1 October 1850.

⁴⁰⁹ The first church to be consecrated was not completed until 1857 a few months after the new Bishop (Harper) arrived.

⁴¹⁰ Marr, 126 calls the Church at this time ‘inert and almost moribund’, yet she also mentions buildings being erected at the same time.

⁴¹¹ Ibid. As throughout New Zealand, from 1852-3, Canterbury administration changed from the Canterbury Association to an elected government. However, unlike other provinces Canterbury lost not only its autonomy but its leader as Godley left in 1853.

unselfishly, and often with little support from the community or indeed the Church itself, worked towards improving, establishing and keeping open the female refuge, orphanage and social work activities. Their vocation was to assist those who fell upon difficulties and could be seen as failures in their uncle Edward Gibbon Wakefield's perfect settlement. 'Looking back over the first 30 years of the settlement, though several undertakings are termed 'Anglican' the church never gave its hearty support to any social services.'⁴¹²

Although both the Church and Provincial Government accepted their responsibilities to care for the poor and needy, there was no clear organisation to administer aid. The Church supported organisations half-heartedly, for example providing the land for the orphanage but little money. While the Church agreed it had a duty of care for its parishioners it did not exert itself in that direction. Indeed, the chaplaincy of the hospital, gaol and mental asylum, which was of course Anglican, was not paid for by the Church. They requested the Provincial Government support it financially, as they believed 'it was unreasonable to expect the 'poverty-stricken church'⁴¹³ to fund the position.⁴¹⁴ However the Church struggled⁴¹⁵ when the Government wanted to take control of the institutions. For example, the synod passed a resolution saying the 'asylum shall be managed with a distinct reference to the fact that it is a charitable institution in connection with the Church of England.'⁴¹⁶

Some groups, such as the Benevolent Society (which received funding from both the Church and Provincial Government) were established in the 1860s only to go into recess in the early 1870s as they were deemed unnecessary. Many of these were reconstituted in the mid 1870s when Vogel's scheme brought 'less suitable' migrants to Canterbury. In 1861 the Municipal

⁴¹² Roper, 72.

⁴¹³ Roper, 70.

⁴¹⁴ It should be no surprise that Rev Torlesse was the man chosen to undertake this duty.

⁴¹⁵ Rev. Torlesse remarked that the 'Orphanage was in a terrible mess and the little orphans badly used, this is an additional blow to the Church of England which insisted on keeping the orphanage in its own hands', Roper, 12 Yet 'the synod was determined that [it] should not get beyond its control or cease to be an Anglican institution.', Roper 13.

⁴¹⁶ Roper, 13.

Council passed an ordinance providing for the preservation of the health of the public and the care and maintenance of the destitute, poor and sick. In that year an administrator was employed to manage the funds given to the Poor Relief Board.⁴¹⁷ While much of the money went to outdoor relief,⁴¹⁸ some also went to wages and materials for men employed on road gangs. Instead of construction work they were employed breaking 500 yards of stone (for road metal) which was held at the gaol site. Although Godley made negative comments about Otago's work for relief scheme, men were employed in Christchurch on all manner of activities such as planting trees in the domain and constructing roads. In 1867 the Secretary of Public Works of the Canterbury Provincial Council commented that due to such relief the number of men 'unemployed' was actually growing, so piece work was to be established.⁴¹⁹

Although the name Municipal suggests that this Board was focused on the needy of just Christchurch, it did endeavour to assist those outside of the town boundary.⁴²⁰ However, it was too easy for local authorities to ignore their duties and not contribute. Slowly, those councils furthest away, such as Ashburton, decided that they could provide better care by managing their own funds and needy. Institutions such as refuges, orphanages and elderly care were still, by and large, sited in Christchurch and were open to all Cantabrians. Organization of aid in Canterbury was rather haphazard with the Provincial Government managing both the hospital (in Christchurch) and province-wide charitable aid via the Hospital and Charitable Aid Bill in 1864. In 1863 the Provincial Government created a board of trustees to manage the hospital, however financial and other difficulties saw that group relinquish its responsibilities the following year, necessitating the Government to reassume its hospital managing duties and combining it, for sake of economy, with charitable care.

⁴¹⁷ Tennant (1989), 19 states that Canterbury and Auckland were the only two provinces to employ a separate designated officer relieving; other areas used local policemen or immigration officers.

⁴¹⁸ In 1853 the Provincial government set aside £50 for relief, in 1866 it was £4721.

⁴¹⁹ 'Instructions etc. to the Officer Administering Charitable Aid', 6 July, 1867.

⁴²⁰ As Marr, 58 reminds us 'by 1852 all the land above the Rakaia had been taken up', and mostly settled.

Tennant points out that this Bill — which authorised the Provincial Superintendent to levy a special poverty rate to obtain money to fund these two areas of care — ‘brought that province closer than any other to having a Poor Law.’⁴²¹ While many would have seen this accusation as a failure, a reverting to the old ways of ‘Home’, Godley had been a proponent of the poor laws. At any rate it seems not to have survived the first few years of collecting. While Canterbury was not averse to introducing a levy to assist the poor, their charitable aid was very limited. In the 1870s at least while it spent more on relief than any other province, it was actually one of the meanest – expending less per head of the population than some of the poorer areas.⁴²²

A cause of complaint, especially in Otago, was that while they were able to maintain their charitable institutions by voluntary contributions and the government pound for pound subsidy, Canterbury received more government aid than any other province.⁴²³ Member of the House of Representatives for Oamaru, Samuel Shrimski stated that Otago and Southland had a population of 134,000 and Canterbury 112,000; the latter province contributed £471,000 to the general fund, but Otago provided £890,000. In the last financial year the Government distributed £30,520 towards aid: Canterbury received £12,742.15.1, while the whole of Otago and Southland only received £3,050.5.2.⁴²⁴ At the meeting was the Colonial Treasurer Major Atkinson who agreed saying: ‘at present the entire cost of aid in Canterbury is drawn from the colony as a whole.’⁴²⁵

⁴²¹ Tennant, (1989), 19.

⁴²² The Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives reported that during the 1853-54 year Nelson was listed as expending money on charitable aid, but not Otago nor Canterbury. However, the following year Otago placed £83.10.6 on their estimates, but Canterbury still made no provision for it.

⁴²³ The editor of the *North Otago Times* commented in 31 July 1885: ‘The people of Christchurch are apparently bent upon being kept at the expense of the general public of New Zealand. Oamaru has hitherto managed to conduct its charitable affairs without making an ad misericordiam appeal to the Government for assistance but this is no reason why other towns should have exceptional advantage.’

⁴²⁴ *Otago Daily Times* 16 April, 1883. Shrimski put it into perspective by adding: Lyttelton with a population of 4,100 received £2242 while Oamaru and district with a population of 14,000 received only £372 pounds.

⁴²⁵ *North Otago Times*, 17 April 1884.

Shrimski ended the meeting by saying to Major Atkinson that the Major had said that ‘we should stamp out pauperism’. Shrimski suggested that in order to do so, Atkinson should say to ‘Canterbury: you are not like Otago it has a people of whom the colony may feel proud — a hard working industrious and self-reliant people who support their own poor. You Canterbury are wealthy and prosperous, no one can afford better than you to put your hand in your pocket and do likewise’.⁴²⁶ It was not until 1885 that systematic management of charitable aid came to Canterbury, as part of the Hospitals and Charitable Institutions Act.

Reviewing the evidence provided in this chapter it is clear that there were definite differences in the philosophies and methods of administration surrounding charitable aid in Otago and Canterbury. These differences were due primarily to the variation in how this activity was managed in Scotland and England. Colonization of provinces by these two countries was seen as an opportunity to establish a ‘better’ place to live for their chosen settlers. While the goal may have been the same, the ideal was not, and the best method of managing the settlers and settlement was very different.

Grainger points out that there are two theories regarding colonization. One is Utilitarianism: where founders seek ‘to prepare the minds of the new citizens and set them in beneficial action, mindful of their reciprocal duties to self and others.’⁴²⁷ The other theory is paternalism: ‘where economies of scales released [founders] from an intermediate role between state and subject, restoring their independence as social exemplars and philanthropists ... In a society without pauperism they ... could become (sic) moral paternalists ... benevolent merely through general guidance rather than regular or ad hoc relief.’⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ The Colonial Treasurer in Oamaru, *North Otago Times*, 14 April, 1883.

⁴²⁷ Grainger, (1997), 144.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

Considering the provision of charitable aid between Otago and Canterbury, it is clear that these two theories explain accurately the differences between how care was viewed and provided. Otago was utilitarian: having common views, the community worked together to assist each other. It is no accident that Otago shared their wealth in providing aid as well as universities, libraries and hospitals very early on in their history compared with Canterbury.

Canterbury, on the other hand, was paternalistic. The Canterbury Association relished the role of parent and advisor — knowing what was expected of it but somehow always falling short of their own and others objectives. Charity was disjointed and limited. Although it had much to offer in terms of wealth and administration it did not actively assist those in need.

Chapter Three:

Experiencing the Legacy; Oamaru and Ashburton

In 1852 the provinces were created in conjunction with the Constitution Act. Before this, New Zealand was administered from Auckland. Premier of New Zealand, Julius Vogel stated that ‘it was an ambitious effort to attempt to settle the colony from so many points,’⁴²⁹ and provincialism was a logical move. The 1852 Act enabled isolated communities to administer their own affairs as semi-autonomous regions, with money provided from central government. By the time the provinces were abolished in 1876, both Otago and Canterbury had established definite and divergent philosophies and methods for dealing with their poor and needy. Using Oamaru and Ashburton as case studies this thesis will show how these different philosophies affected administration of aid on a local level.

Oamaru and Ashburton were service towns for rural areas of significant prosperity. Both areas were dominated by waterways. In the case of Ashburton, the area was defined by wide, flood prone rivers: the Rangitata to the south and the Rakaia to the north, with the temperamental Ashburton (Hakatere) in the middle. Historian Leopold Acland said that the Rakaia and Rangitata ‘delayed the occupation of the plains.’⁴³⁰ ‘When early settler, Edward Chapman applied for runs 90 and 91 in May 1853, John Deans expressed grave doubts as to the advisability of attempting to establish a station there because, he said, the river frequently detained people for months.’⁴³¹ The year before, John Hall (later Sir) and his brothers had

⁴²⁹ Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives, 1870, B-2, p. 15, quoted in Malcolm McKinnon. ‘Colonial and provincial government — Colony and provinces, 1852 to 1863’, Te Ara — the Encyclopaedia of New Zealand, updated 13-Jul-12 URL: <http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/en/colonial-and-provincial-government/page-2>

⁴³⁰ Acland, 112.

⁴³¹ Ibid.

purchased run 116 'but the general inaccessibility of the place' encouraged them to abandon the land south of the Rakaia River.⁴³² While the Halls took possession of the Ashburton Run in 1853, the town itself was not settled until 1858, when an accommodation house to provide lodging for travellers waiting to cross the Ashburton River was erected. Although the border between the two provinces was demarcated by the Waitaki River, Oamaru's *raison d'être* was its harbour; it became a port of entry from 1861.

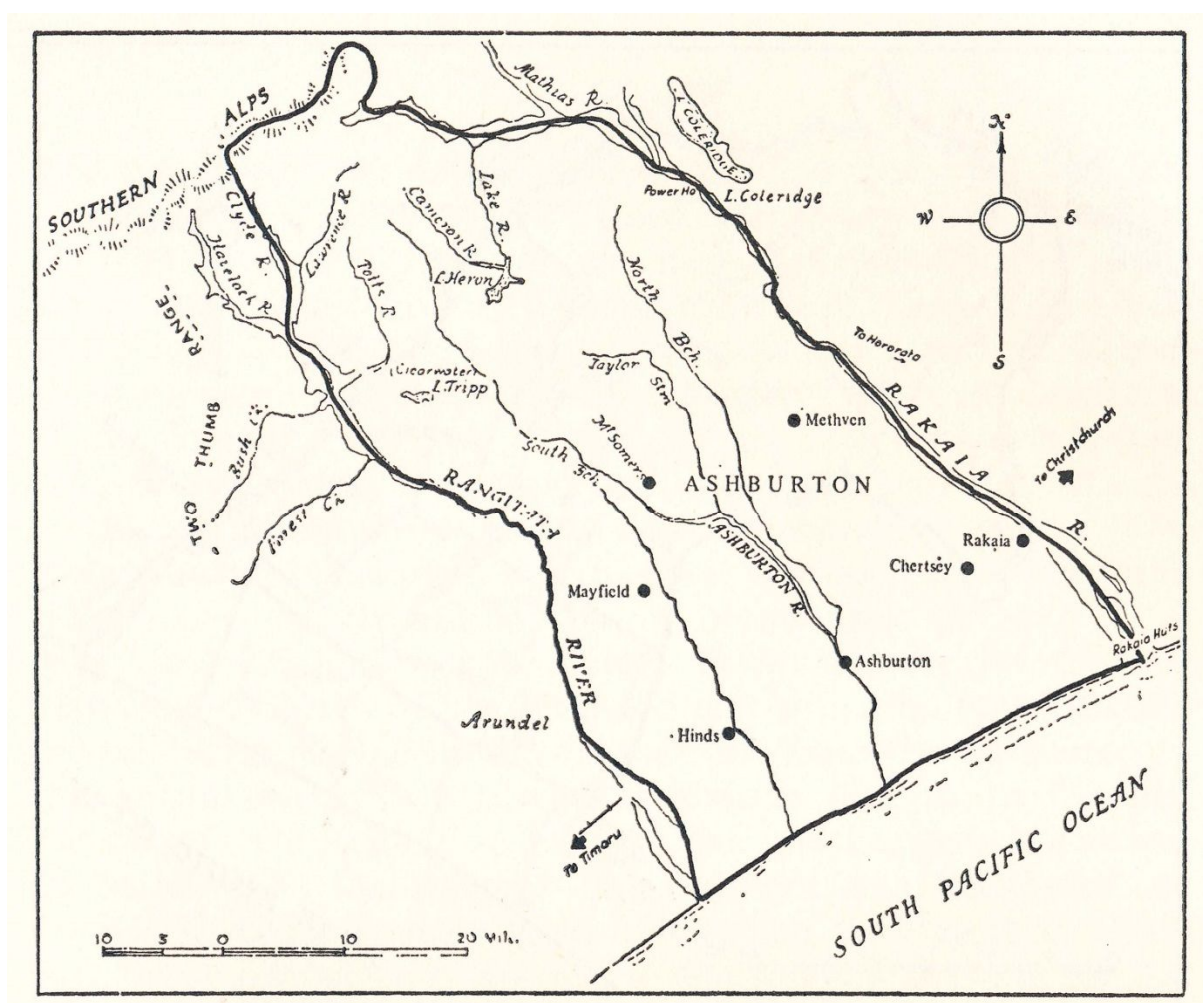


Figure 1: Ashburton District 1864, Scotter (1965), p 483.

While they had these things in common, there were many important differences between the two communities. Ashburton was in the original block of land purchased by the Canterbury

⁴³² Acland, 116.

Association; the Ashburton River was the Association's southern boundary.⁴³³ Oamaru and Northern Otago were a later addition to the original area established by the Otago Association in 1848. The province of Otago was not created until 1852, but what was to become North Otago had been included in the Otago registration district for birth, death and marriages in 1848, but it had no representation in the Provincial Council until Oamaru became a Borough. Although both towns were isolated from their provincial capitals — by geography and in Oamaru's case by difficult terrain and greater distance,⁴³⁴ Oamaru also was estranged from Dunedin on a philosophical level, as it did not perceive the same connection to its capital as Ashburton did to Christchurch.

How the areas were accessed had a major impact on the administration of the communities. Oamaru, having a port, developed quickly; landlocked Ashburton⁴³⁵ however, grew much more slowly. The Oamaru Run was first settled in 1853 and the growing community formed a Vigilance Committee in 1861. In 1866 Oamaru became a borough. The Ashburton Borough Council was not established until 1878. However, Ashburton was declared a township in 1864, and administered by the Ashburton Road Board. Road Boards were established in both Canterbury and Otago in 1864. These boards eventually amalgamated and formed county councils (Ashburton and Waitaki respectively) in 1876. In both communities, the earlier council assumed the role of civic leader, especially as far as aid was concerned. Both Ashburton County and Oamaru Borough, for example, were responsible for the foundation of their local hospitals, with the Ashburton County Council for some years also acting as the Hospital Board.

⁴³³ Until 1854 the central government administered the land below the Ashburton River under the Commission of Crown Lands. Acland, 133.

⁴³⁴ Isolation itself was no reason for establishing a local charity organisation. In 14 March 1879 the Waitaki County noted (while handing over a £20 donation to their local benevolent society) that Vincent County contributed to The Otago Benevolent Society, Minutes Waitaki County Council. A gold rich, but isolated area, Vincent could have easily established their own Benevolent Society but chose instead to join an existing scheme.

⁴³⁵ Ashburton itself is just over 16 kms from the sea.

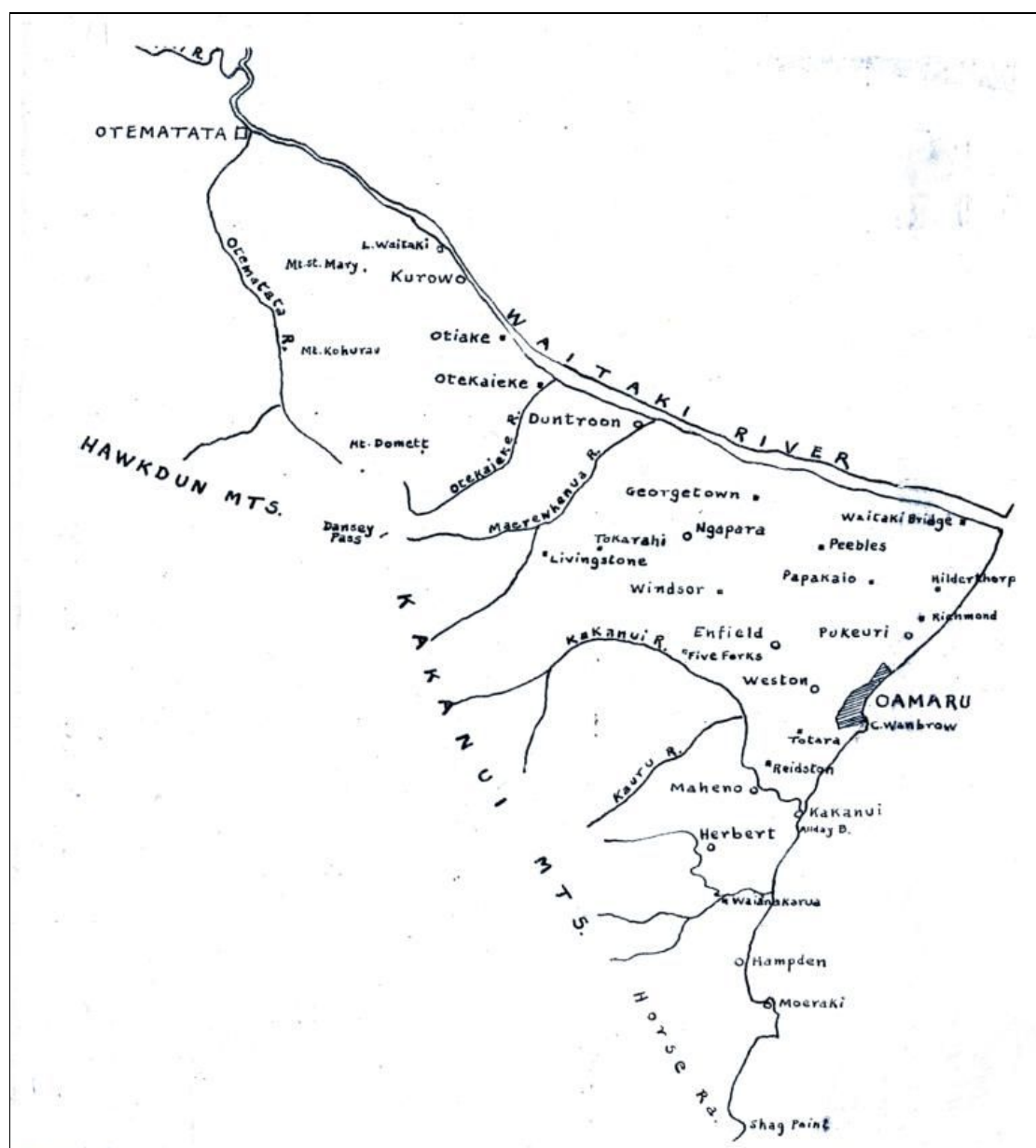


Figure 2: North Otago, McDonald (1965).

Oamaru's Borough Council began investigations into the best site for a hospital in 1864.⁴³⁶

The town's first doctor arrived in 1858 but he and his successor left as 'the population was

⁴³⁶ 16 May 1864 the Oamaru Town Board requested the secretary to write to the government petitioning for a 'piece of ground for a hospital'. On the 16 August a notice of motion was put forward that a fund should be raised for the purpose of erecting a hospital, Minutes Oamaru Town Board.

yet too scattered and far too healthy to support a doctor.’⁴³⁷ There were ill however and serious cases had to sail to Dunedin for care. Lack of funds meant the project was delayed, but by 1872 the town’s hospital was opened and a local committee elected to administer it. When the Committee approached the Provincial Government for regular financial assistance they were turned down. The Town Board minutes of 16 August 1864 records ‘that Superintendent (of the province) was requested to place on the estimates a sum of money to assist in the above project.’ They were, however, awarded a one-off payment of £200.⁴³⁸ On the whole, Oamaru raised its own funds and administered the Hospital without any input from Dunedin.

Ashburton, however, relied heavily on Provincial support for aid and medical care. The building of the immigration barracks in Ashburton, as well as Rakaia, were subsidised by the Province to encourage workers into the rural hinterland. Road Boards too had cottages to provide accommodation to those who required it. While there is no evidence to suggest that these cottages were used for charitable aid, Road Board minutes mention requests for rent reductions due to hardship. Certainly, although the source may or may not be the cottages and barracks, rents in Ashburton were paid to Christchurch for charitable aid purposes.⁴³⁹

In 1874, Ashburton’s barracks were hurriedly erected; ‘the shortage of materials and labour resulted in primitive and draughty quarters.’⁴⁴⁰ But the small community, as well as Christchurch, believed it was essential that, given that it could be isolated by rivers, a hospital service should be available in Ashburton. To achieve this goal, the immigration barracks was

⁴³⁷ Robert Valpy Fulton, *Medical Practice in Otago and Southland in the Early Days: a Description of the Manner of Life, Trails and Difficulties of Some of the Pioneer Doctors of the Places in Which, and of the People Among whom they Laboured*, (Dunedin: Otago Daily Times and Witness Newspapers, 1922), 211 – 12.

⁴³⁸ See ‘Oamaru Hospital’ *North Otago Times*, 23 June 1871. <http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz>.

⁴³⁹ In 1878 the County Council discussed Ashburton rents received on account of charitable aid for Canterbury. They queried why, if the County had promised to provide Christchurch with money for aid, could the rents they received not be paid directly into the County Fund, Minutes Ashburton County Council 3 July, 1878.

⁴⁴⁰ Maurice Otley. *The History of Medicine in the Ashburton County New Zealand 1855 – 1955* (Christchurch: Maurice Otley, 1978), 121.

declared a casualty ward⁴⁴¹ and provided with a medical chest by the Provincial Council. Part of the barrack masters duties included providing aid and medical assistance. Although it served a number of roles, the barracks was often referred to as ‘The Hospital’.



Figure 3: Original Ashburton Immigration Barracks, Ashburton Museum Collection 03.1988.0020

Interestingly, while having medical care in Ashburton was a priority for Christchurch, it was less so for the fledging city itself. While Fenwick states that ‘the founders of the province overlooked little that was essential for what they firmly believed would develop into a densely populated and prosperous settlement.’⁴⁴² They also believed that there were more pressing avenues than hospital buildings on which to spend their funds. This comment raises the question of what purpose a hospital served in the minds of the founders of Canterbury. Christchurch established a casualty ward in Lyttelton in 1850; however its main hospital was not erected until 1861. This 11 year gap from settlement compares poorly with Otago which established a hospital in 1851 — just four years after that settlement was founded. It is

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² Fenwick, 1.

possible that the view that hospitals were for the very poor (as held by English and Scottish authorities) or Maori (as suggested by Governor Grey) meant that it was not high on the list of immediate priorities, as it was supposed there would be few who would require these services. Health care and social aid, if required, was considered to be a domestic activity. As David MacMillan says: ‘in the early days when a person took ill, the first steps were taken by the friends and relatives ... if they failed to cure they would send for the nurse or some friend with medical experience. If she failed a doctor would be sent for.’⁴⁴³

Conversely, hospitals were seen by some as a symbol of civilisation and prestige. Both Otago and Canterbury envisaged a hospital and college (university) in their settlement. The very naming of Godley’s Christ Church to be located near Oxford implied education was important to his vision, and he spent much time speaking about it. Otago too came from a very strong culture of literacy and learning (alongside the Edinburgh University, the Free Church established its New College in 1846). There is a subliminal message in Canterbury histories and commentaries, however, that once Dunedin established a Hospital and began plans to establish a College, Christchurch turned its back on the ideas and focussed its energies elsewhere. For example, before the 1862 Hospital was erected, Christchurch was brimming with such institutions as hotels, theatres, Ballantynes, the Jockey Club, Horticultural Society and even a brass band.⁴⁴⁴ While dashed hopes and ‘sour grapes’ may be one reason, pure economics may have been another. When Sir John Cracroft Wilson (Provincial Executive) examined the Province’s first estimates in 1875 he struck off £100,000. He considered that too much was spent on charitable aid and education. William

⁴⁴³ MacMillan, 342.

⁴⁴⁴ Bennett, 20.

Maskill (Provincial Secretary) 'proposed that charitable aid should be thrown upon the liberality of the public, as in other provinces.'⁴⁴⁵

In New Zealand therefore a hospital was a status symbol as much as, if not more than a facility for care. As opposed to infirmaries associated with work / poor houses, early New Zealand hospitals took only a few incurable or contagious cases. Canterbury Hospital's first By-Law (1864) started that 'persons in a dying condition or incurable should not be admitted.'⁴⁴⁶ Others unlikely to be allowed access included 'women in an advanced state of pregnancy (except in cases of sudden accident), no person disordered in their senses or subject to epileptic fits. No one suspected of small pox, venereal disease, itch or other infectious distempers, or persons having chronic ulcers on their legs, inoperable cancers or dropsy's in their last stages.' While the veto against dying patients was later withdrawn, the bylaw also stated that any other person with the stated conditions 'inadvertently admitted would not be suffered to continue.'⁴⁴⁷ Those cases that were excluded from hospital care were forced to find other means of support, which often included charitable agencies. Christchurch Hospital was an early indication that the ideal of a better England was not easily attained. Limited public support and lack of funding placed Christchurch's hospital in distress, and the Board of Governors returned the running of the institution to the Provincial Council. However, the Council believed 'the ordinary revenue of the Province ought not to provide funds for the maintenance of the hospital and other necessary charitable purposes.'⁴⁴⁸ In 1864 Canterbury passed its Hospital and Charitable Aid Bill. This ensured the cost of maintaining the Hospital was guaranteed by rates 'levied on all property throughout the province' — essentially a poor tax. Dr Bennett laments: it was a 'reversion to the bad

⁴⁴⁵ Gardner, (1971), 335.

⁴⁴⁶ See Bennett, 28.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Quoted in Bennett, 30.

English system of rating for poor relief with workhouses and infirmaries. It was the very thing that Canterbury's founders had been trying to escape.'⁴⁴⁹

By 1878, the Christchurch Hospital Board reported that 34 medical cases had been treated in Ashburton; these were funded by the Province. Other ill Ashburtonians went to Christchurch and stayed in hotels and boarding houses — and, when later admitted to hospital, were listed as Christchurch residents.⁴⁵⁰ There was a clear division, at least in the minds of many, between health care for the needy and that for others. For example, a petition was circulated by the Ashburton Road Board to raise a subscription to encourage a doctor to establish himself in the area. Dr Trevor arrived in 1874, but there is little evidence that his duties included administering to the barrack inhabitants — they belonged to the Province. This situation was clearly unsuitable, with the inadequate building offering shelter to 'immigrants, sick and aged, general sick and lying-in patients.'⁴⁵¹

While situated in Ashburton, the barracks was considered an outpost of Christchurch. In 1879 the Ashburton County Council decided that a hospital should be established in the area and they granted 'a sum not exceeding £5000' to achieve this.⁴⁵² Local historian, W.H. Scotter, postulates that the County 'built it as an expression of its own importance as one of the strongest and wealthiest local authorities and to show its independence from Christchurch's leading strings.'⁴⁵³ He adds that when the Road Boards of Westerfield, Mt Somers, Rakaia and Ashburton were granted permission to form a county, boards north of Christchurch met in Amberley to discuss how they too could 'free themselves from the

⁴⁴⁹ Bennett, 30.

⁴⁵⁰ Highlighting the disparity Otley, volume 5, p. 4-5 states that the 34 patients treated in Ashburton cost the Province £147.18.5 (of which £38.10.0 had been recovered), but the County had been put to the expense of £1000 per year for the support of Ashburton patients in Christchurch.

⁴⁵¹ Otley, condensed book, 121.

⁴⁵² Ashburton County Council Minutes, 8 January 1879. Finally costing £5,022.10, it was one of the most expensive buildings in town at the time, Beatrice Silverwood, *Ashburton Borough Centenary, 1878-1978: one hundred years of progress* (Ashburton: Ashburton Borough Council 1978), 41.

⁴⁵³ Scotter, (1972), 139.

malign influence of Christchurch' using Ashburton as an example.⁴⁵⁴ This suggests that although they were more inclined to accept input from Christchurch than Oamaru was from Dunedin, it still wished to maintain some form of independence.

While, like Oamaru, the Ashburton County Council raised money for the Hospital it did not hand over the administration to a committee, as Oamaru did. The County Council was the Hospital Board, with a revolving subcommittee given specific responsibility for its management. This situation continued until 1910, when the Ashburton Hospital Board was established. Such was its input that the Hospital was called the County Hospital. Scotter states that the Hospital was 'little more than a philanthropic institution.'⁴⁵⁵ People paid fees (£1 per week in the public ward and £2 in the private) only if they were able. 'This only bought in about a tenth of the expenses.'⁴⁵⁶

One of the major differences between Oamaru and Ashburton was the part the Hospital played in the care of its citizens. For Ashburton the hospital was the area where most of the philanthropic effort was directed, whereas in Oamaru charitable aid and medical care were two distinct, but similar, areas which often fought for money, and sometimes amongst each other. Oamaru's relatively straightforward story of local people trying to provide affordable relief to fellow citizens, through an elected organisation, changes very little through the period under study. Ashburton's saga, however, is full of changes in administration and focus (from the hospital to outrelief) and the ever present battle for control between itself and Christchurch. The changes in how aid was administered and even perceived by administrations and the public, brought about by the 1885 Act and its 1886 amendment, only intensifies the difference between the two towns. It certainly made Ashburton's situation

⁴⁵⁴ W.H. Scotter, *A History of Canterbury, Volume 3, 1876 – 1950* (Christchurch: Canterbury centennial Historical and Literary Committee, 1965), 11.

⁴⁵⁵ Scotter, (1972), 139.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid.

more complicated. However at the core of the differences is the fact that charitable aid was administered and viewed differently in Otago and Canterbury due to the dissimilar views of England and Scotland and the philosophies of the different provinces as highlighted in the theories of Utilitarianism and Paternalism in colonization, explained by Grainger in chapter two.

While it is easy to make sweeping judgements, it does appear that Oamaru had a view to establishing social aid networks from its establishment, whereas Ashburton seemed willing to allow Christchurch to take on this role, until it was ready to do so itself. This allowed Ashburton's Council time to concentrate on other areas of the district's development such as roads, bridges and even poison grain to kill birds that threatened their lucrative grain crops.⁴⁵⁷ Almost as soon as Oamaru was founded, the authorities were preparing for calls for aid. The Oamaru Borough Council was created in April 1866 and by August that year, the new Council voted £150 to be given to the Mayor 'to be under his sole control for charitable and such other purposes as may be conducive to the interests of the Corporation.'⁴⁵⁸ While the Councillors debated on the amount set aside,⁴⁵⁹ none objected to the motion. The local newspaper, however asked 'is there really such an amount of destitution and distress in the place?'⁴⁶⁰

While distress may not have been commonplace in the 1860s, by the 1870s things had changed. Gavin McLean states 'there was a good deal of destitution, especially when the public works were curtailed.'⁴⁶¹ Although there were occasional calls for aid earlier, in 1876 Oamaru faced a series of calls to assist needy neighbours. Finally the Daly case stimulated

⁴⁵⁷ For example, in the Ashburton County Council's 1886 – 87 budget, it was stated that in the previous year the £40.10.1 was paid out to the unemployed, but the expenditure on poisoned wheat was £66 16 6.

⁴⁵⁸ *The Oamaru Times and Waitaki Reporter*, 16 August, 1866.

⁴⁵⁹ *The Oamaru Times and Waitaki Reporter*, 9 August, 1866.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶¹ K.C. McDonald *Oamaru 1878, a Colonial Town*, ed. Gavin McLean (Oamaru: Publication Group of the Waitaki District Council, 2006), 82.

action. In 1876 the Mayor spoke of a family who lived in a one roomed house, in a 'filthy condition [without] even common necessities.'⁴⁶² Later the full story emerged stating that Mrs Daly had caught typhoid. While the Council questioned who would look after her children (3 years, 18 months and one on the way) if she was admitted to hospital, a more pressing concern was how to stop the conditions that could lead to a serious outbreak. This is probably the first Oamaru example of how social aid was as much about safeguarding the community as a whole as it was about helping individuals.⁴⁶³ A few days later the editor of the local newspaper took up the cause, calling the case 'a hiatus in our social machinery', Steward called upon the Council to act as Board of Health to monitor lax sanitation.⁴⁶⁴

The Daly case saw the folly in relying on unorganised community charity. Neighbours had been offering assistance until they discovered what the illness was. The local doctor and Council were unsure how to act and the police had to be called in to arrange care for the youngest child, while the rest of the family were hospitalised.⁴⁶⁵ The *North Otago Times* featured updates on the funds raised, which was competing with subscriptions for an accident caused by a boiler explosion that occurred in May,⁴⁶⁶ and in August the town was again mobilised to assist the Fleming Family.⁴⁶⁷ In response to these events, Steward made another call for some form of official means of caring for Oamaruvians. He said that with 'a population of 5000 it was inevitable that through epidemic, accident or any other cause there will be cases of distress or absolute want. It will never do that in such cases their relief shall be left to accident, to chance kindness, to the action of any particular church [or] application

⁴⁶² *North Otago Times*, 14 April, 1876.

⁴⁶³ As suggested in Chapter One.

⁴⁶⁴ *North Otago Times*, 16 August, 1876.

⁴⁶⁵ The hospital's monthly report, printed in the *North Otago Times* 18 May shows that Mr and Mrs Daly and their 3 year old son Michael were admitted to the hospital. Mrs Daly and the child she was confined of in hospital died.

⁴⁶⁶ The funds for Mr Daly amassed £24. 10s, compared with the Waiareka railway accident fund which raised £375 9s.

⁴⁶⁷ 10 August 1876 William Fleming, a married man with three children, just arrived in colony was killed by a fall of earth. 'The poor widow and children are almost if not in absolute want'. The community gathered £140 3s and the *North Otago Times* 18 August, stated they even got £1.16 from the Chinamen.

to the governing body of the town, or that applicants should be practically told move on it is not our business we have no special funds for such cases etc.’⁴⁶⁸ He believed that there was a need for ‘dispensing charity in a systematic, instead of a spasmodic, manner. [He envisaged a group to] establish the proper machinery for a general accident and relief fund.’⁴⁶⁹ Highlighting the position of women in Victorian New Zealand, in response to these calls a group of ladies offered to instigate a Benevolent Society, but their offer was ignored.

He added that there ought to be a benevolent organisation as was in places such as Christchurch:

The operations of such organisations are at once a protection to the public against indiscriminating aid, the throwing away of money on the unworthy the parasites of society and an effective preventive to the occurrence by any possibility of the really distressed perishing for lack of succour. Belonging to no particular section of the church it can be aided by all and will extend its help to all persons of whatever creed or nationality on the sole simple ground of our common humanity.⁴⁷⁰

Apart from describing how the Committee might work, Steward added that it ‘would afford means of instant communication between those in distress and those able and willing to afford relief.’⁴⁷¹ Men and clergy of Oamaru finally met on 5 September 1876, at a meeting called by the newly elected Mayor, *North Otago Times* editor, William Steward. ‘During the past six months [, he said,] more cases of real distress had arisen in the district through accidents and other unfortunate cases than had occurred during the two years previous.’ [He added that while] ‘Oamaru responded most liberally to cases of need’ [there was the possibility that other cases were neglected.] ‘The time had come, he said, for forming an organisation which should deal systematically with cases of distress and afford relief on some well-considered plan.’ [The Mayor suggested that] ‘every man who had health and strength

⁴⁶⁸ *North Otago Times*, 16 August, 1876.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁰ Steward was mistaken in that there was a separate organisation for charity in Christchurch at that time. What was operating was a sub Committee of the Local Council which administered aid. Like Ashburton, civil authorities managed aid as part of their other duties.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid.

should appropriate a portion of his earnings towards the support of the society', 'systematic giving was much better than giving to all and sundry.'⁴⁷²

Steward proposed the name should be called the Oamaru Benevolent Society but the meeting altered it to North Otago. Anglican minister, Reverend Gifford moved that all who gave one pound should be able to vote in its management, as occurred in England. From its members, a committee would be elected. Steward responded, saying that he believed that the organisation would be granted the same subsidy as hospitals. Under the *Hospital Ordinance 1862* public donations for hospitals and similar institutions received a pound for pound subsidy from the government.

Although still only a provisional committee, the 16 town and 16 county members⁴⁷³ (plus the medical profession and clergy⁴⁷⁴ ex officio) already began talking about a building. Subscription levies were mentioned as a means to raise the necessary funds, although one man did suggest a poor rate, which was ignored.⁴⁷⁵ It is tempting to suggest that the Benevolent Society was conceived in early response to the abolition of the provincial councils which occurred in November that year. However, while it may have had an impact, no mention was made of the forthcoming event in the meetings forming the society.

Although the Hospital received its grant and other funding from the Province, most of the Benevolent Society's support came from within the community. The main support the society received from the Province was the immigrant cottages. Like Ashburton, Oamaru had

⁴⁷² "North Otago Benevolent Society", *North Otago Times*, 5 September, 1876.

⁴⁷³ At the 12 September meeting the wards of the Benevolent Society were established. They ranged as far as Omarama, Otematata and Benmore. *North Otago Times*.

⁴⁷⁴ Letter to editor, *North Otago Times* 6 September, 1876 expressed concern that Father Donovan was not at the meeting and asked if he was not invited or did he just not turn up. The writer was concerned; would not the Catholics be availing themselves of the assistance offered by the Society? The only religious leader who was not warmly welcomed by the Committee (in fact he was voted against in 16 November 1880) was Congregationalist Rev Foster. This was in response to a letter he had written 'Home' which was published in newspapers in England discouraging people to migrate to New Zealand (see *North Otago Times*, 11 November, 1880).

⁴⁷⁵ In its 1878-1879 estimates the Waitaki County Council set aside £20 for charitable aid. However it also earmarked £130 for libraries.

immigrant cottages provided by the Secretary of Lands in 1874. In 1877 the Benevolent Society began requesting the barracks and associated cottages to be used as a “benevolent asylum.” They pointed out that in April the buildings were put up for auction and no one made a bid on them. When the Minister of Lands came to inspect the site he said that one other society had been given immigrant cottages for the same purpose (this may have been Ashburton). By the following year they were vested in the Society, along with land for gardens.⁴⁷⁶ The immigrant barracks and cottages in Oamaru served a similar function as in Ashburton. Immigrants, the elderly and infirm, those in straitened circumstances and unemployed female servants lived side by side. While the immigrants were catered for by government subsidy, the rest of those in need were provided for largely by local funds. Thus Oamaru administered aid to both the ill at the hospital and the needy in the barracks, as well as in private homes, with little input from outside agencies. By the time the provincial councils were disestablished and central government took up much of these responsibilities, North Otago had already established a solid administration of charitable and social aid.

The provision of Ashburton’s charitable aid was not as straight forward. Up until 1876, aid was administered in the same haphazard manner as Oamaru had been. Serious cases of need were funded by Christchurch. When the Canterbury Provincial Council was disbanded, the administration of aid was placed in disarray. The only authority who offered to ‘bring an end to the chaos’⁴⁷⁷ was Christchurch city, which formed the Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, in 1878. This was largely a city based organisation, although they did invite neighbouring districts, such as Ashburton, to join. As in England, the composition was very civic based — mayors or county chairman or their nominees and members chosen by the Government. There were no elections. In an important — but oft regretted step, the Ashburton County

⁴⁷⁶ *North Otago Times*, 30 May 1877. The minutes of the North Otago Benevolent Society stated that the tenants of the cottages were to pay 5 shillings a week rent and some had asked for ground to cultivate. In later years, the Old Men’s Home would require those inmates that could to tend the vegetable garden.

⁴⁷⁷ Otley, condensed book, 125.

Council joined the Christchurch Board and agreed to support it in proportion to the population of the County for one year, or until it was in a position to support similar local institutions in their District.⁴⁷⁸ This arrangement was acceptable until 1882, at which stage the Ashburton County Council approached the Borough to join them in the administration of the Ashburton Hospital. This seemed only fair as the Hospital, located as it was in the town itself, served as many borough residents as those from the country. The Borough agreed; the costs were paid in proportion to the population, with the County paying about ten times as much as the town.⁴⁷⁹ With this agreement, it was decided that the time had come for the Ashburton district to manage its own affairs and advised the North Canterbury Board of their decision. As Ashburton provided much of its funding, Christchurch did its best to prevent this happening, even requesting the Government to prevent it.⁴⁸⁰ From 1882 until 1885, Ashburton's combined committee, made up of councillors from both the County and Borough, managed outrelief within the District, with input, and sometimes substantial funding, from the Road Boards.

Inrelief (institutional care) however still remained the domain of the Canterbury Board, due to it occurring in the immigrant barracks. While it never was funded or managed by Ashburton, a Home Committee was established there as a subcommittee of the Canterbury Charitable Aid Board. It was this building, and its management, that caused most of the problems for Ashburton. It also proved a good example of how the centralised care system as existed in England, could fail those it was created to serve.

⁴⁷⁸ Ashburton County Council minutes, 3 April, 1878.

⁴⁷⁹ Scotter, (1972), 140

⁴⁸⁰ *The Press*, 4 May, 1882.

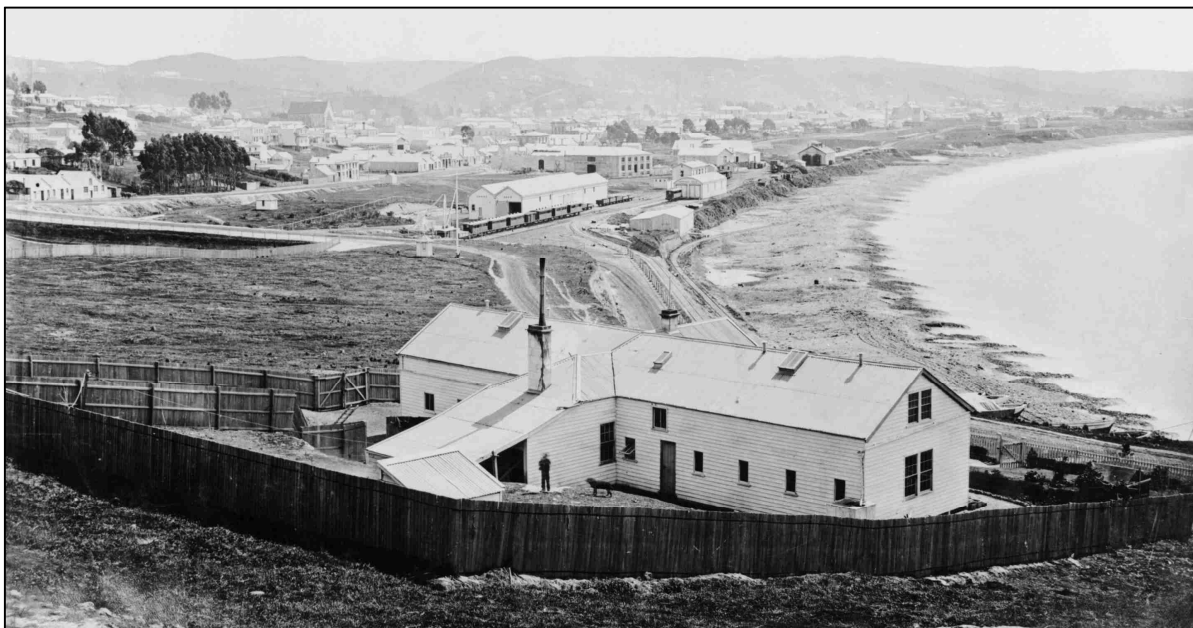


Figure 4: Oamaru Immigration Barracks, 1878. North Otago Museum Archives, 218

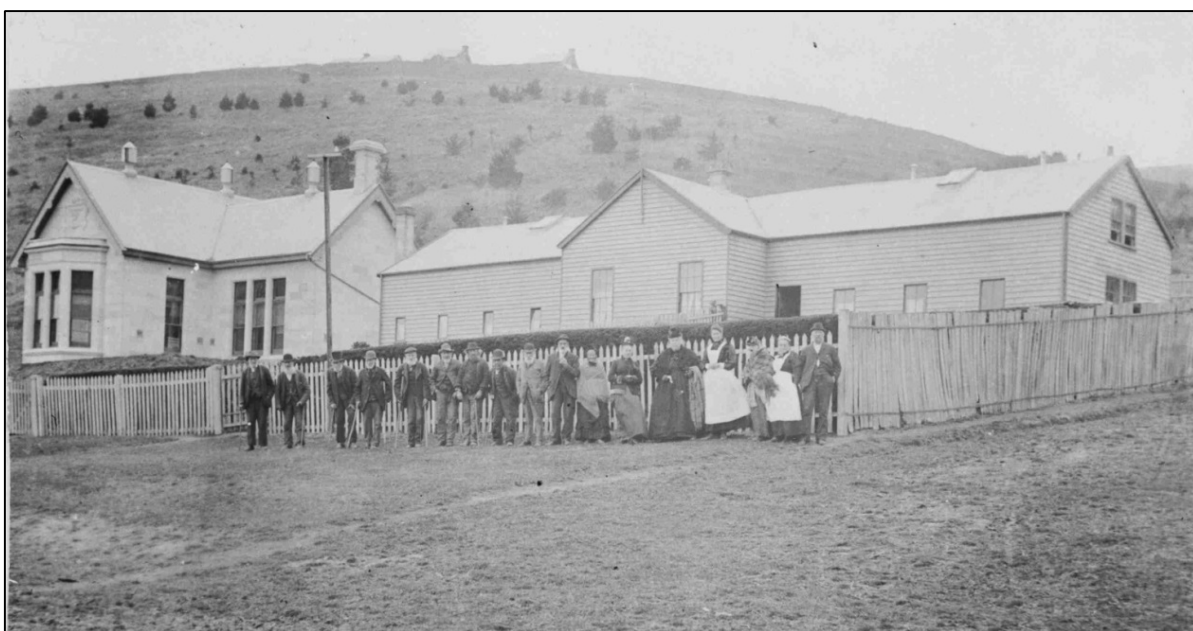


Figure 5: Oamaru Immigration Barracks and addition 1898, North Otago Museum Archive, WDC 204

In April 1878 Ashburton joined the North Canterbury Charitable Aid Board. On 23 August the same year, the Board transferred elderly men from the Selwyn Old Men's Home to Ashburton's immigration barracks. The building was old⁴⁸¹ and unsuitable for its purpose, but most perturbing to the people of Ashburton was that as it served the entire region, its inmates were frequently from out of town, while known, and often well liked, local elderly were faced with sleeping on the riverbed (almost opposite the Home) — lacking in food and shelter.⁴⁸² Ashburton's voice was often unheard in the clamour of a majority of city members trying to help their needy (or in some cases rid themselves of difficult inhabitants).



Figure 6: Inmates of the Old Men's Home, Ashburton setting off to the Christchurch Exhibition, only a small proportion of these men came from Ashburton, Ashburton Museum, 04.1994.0209dd

⁴⁸¹ Mayor Bullock was assured by Christchurch that the move was a temporary one and that a new home would be erected 'soon', Scotter (1972), 138-9, but it did not happen until 1901. The conditions of the building provoked much negative comment from both the community as well as the inmates. Overcrowded and sometimes infested, elderly men often preferred sleeping rough or being imprisoned rather than staying in the Home.

⁴⁸² The 18 July 1896 editorial in the *Ashburton Guardian* stated that of the 67 inmates only 9 were from the area.

This situation was distressing on an emotive level, as most Ashburtonians felt that as the Home was in their community they should have some say in who abided there. What irked the citizens the most, however, was that the district contributions to the Christchurch Board were based on rateable land value, therefore Mid Canterbury paid a colossal sum each year, while poorer areas such as Sydenham paid very little, but received much. The local newspaper *The Ashburton Guardian* proudly boasted that the county had ‘every reason to congratulate itself on the small amount of aid paid out. In such a large tract of country there was only one recipient who received 10 shillings per week. Such a state of affairs speaks volumes for the prosperity and energy of the county at large.’⁴⁸³ Ashburton did not, however, complain when the situation was reversed. Not only did Ashburtonians regularly make use of the Christchurch Hospital, although the County Council repeatedly issued statements to discourage it, but their most needy found succour in Christchurch.

Dunedin and Christchurch were the major funders of, and locations for, regional-wide institutions such as prisons, lunatic asylums and industrial schools and orphanages. Ashburton had no facilities to offer support for long-term residents with a variety of needs, so it was forced to avail themselves of the services based in Christchurch. Oamaru however was keen to provide local care for some people. This was possible largely because Oamaru’s immigration ‘barracks’ consisted of six cottages as well as the large wooden building. Originally, the barracks accepted all types of needy, as many of the immigrants came without employment, a place to live or were unwell.

Being immigrants, and therefore the government’s concern, the local population had little say in their upkeep — although they made numerous comments, for example the *North Otago Times* stated that the barracks, not yet fully furnished, accepted 100 people from one ship and two women were almost immediately delivered of children. The editor, Steward, stated that

⁴⁸³ 5 July 1878.

‘if the Provincial Government intends for the barracks to act as ... convalescence hospital and lying in institution’ they should furnish it as such. Steward went on to say that the barracks also received ‘an infant in a dying condition’ and a couple with consumption.⁴⁸⁴

While demands that the Government look after these newcomers were made, local funds went towards the maintenance and support of local needy without much angst. Local funds also helped support regional institutions, as happened in Ashburton. As the problems faced by inhabitants of Otago and Canterbury were usually similar, comparable facilities were to be found in both provinces.

Such facilities included refuges for females — both domestic servants that were unemployed or without lodging, as well as fallen women. Godley felt single young women threatened his community, saying ‘a few of these have caused me a great deal of embarrassment and annoyance’, and he urged caution to be taken against them.⁴⁸⁵ Christchurch’s female refuge established in 1864 was the first in the country. Originally under the auspices of the Anglican Church, this institution protected both the women and the moral standards of the community. Although the Provincial Government took over the funding of it, for most of its existence the refuge was supervised by ladies, although the management was by men. Other religions, such as the Salvation Army, also had homes for both ‘first falls’ and second falls (sometimes referred to as hopeless cases). Dunedin had both a female refuge, which was erected by prisoners in 1873, as well as homes for unwed mothers. Interestingly, while Canterbury’s homes had both men and women on their committees, almost all the administration and management of Otago’s homes were by women.

While Oamaru supported the Dunedin refuge, contributing £100 in 1878,⁴⁸⁶ they also

⁴⁸⁴ Editorial, 9 June, 1874.

⁴⁸⁵ Godley, 208. The Christchurch refuge was closed in 1890.

⁴⁸⁶ *Statistical Returns of Charitable Aid, 1878*. Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives.

provided care for some women at risk, themselves. In October 1877⁴⁸⁷ the Benevolent Society began investigations concerning using part of the barracks as a servant's home. By the following month they had established it — the domestics paying a small sum to cover their keep. It was a useful proposition; it actually paid for itself — the moral wellbeing of the ladies and the community protected at a cost of 2 shilling a day. However it often came under attack from some committeemen as they believed the refuge did not fulfil the objectives of the Society. Mr Headland (a member of the Committee) responded saying that 'such an institution was very desirable, as servants were not acceptable to respectable boarding-houses and they were reduced to lower class ones.'⁴⁸⁸ The Barrack-master's 1879 report to the Benevolent Committee stated that the 'country ladies almost entirely depend on the institution for their servants', adding that many of the girls are now 'most comfortably and respectably married.'⁴⁸⁹

As in Dunedin, a committee of ladies supervised the inmates. This speaks volumes about the type of needy Oamaru was willing to assist — those of good character and who were looking for employment. This thesis suggests that those of 'low character' or those who were unwilling or unable to work were neither supported nor encouraged to stay in town, ideas that were similar to those of Scottish administrators. The Oamaru Servants' Home was closed in September 1880, despite petitions from the servants themselves. It was reopened in December of the same year, however, and remained so until the 1890s.⁴⁹⁰ Research for this thesis suggests that the need for such a refuge was more necessary in Oamaru, where the busy port saw a number of young women arriving on a weekly basis, than Ashburton, which

⁴⁸⁷ *North Otago Times*, 9 October.

⁴⁸⁸ 16 November, 1880.

⁴⁸⁹ *North Otago Times*, 2 March, 1879. The barrack master was responsible for the barracks as well as the inmates. He had two employers — the government paid for the rations and care of the immigrants while the needy were paid for by the Benevolent Society. This situation often made for uneasy relations between all parties.

⁴⁹⁰ The Society handed over the management of the servants to a committee of ladies 2 February 1885, although references to it were made until 1892 when they just stop.

without a port, was less attractive to speculative single women.

While unemployed domestics may have been more likely in port towns, young children were numerous everywhere. Again, Oamaru dealt with this sector of the community locally. Needy children in New Zealand were divided into two groups — orphan and destitute, and neglected. While the situations and actions of the two groups are obviously different, the most important factor was that a neglected child was provided for by the State (either the Department of Justice or, after 1880 the Department of Education), but a destitute child had to be cared for by the Charitable Aid Board. While some parents made maintenance payments for their Industrial School children, those parents whose children were supported by the local boards were compelled to make payments of sums adjudged fair by the board or courts. For that reason, some children were classified neglected, at least by their parents, in order to reduce expense. (In a similar way some difficult elderly were called lunatic to transfer them to state funded lunatic asylums rather than locally funded old people's home.) Interestingly, while Duncan MacGregor discouraged much state relief, 'always emphasising individualism and self-help, [he] advocated total state support for children, whom he considered educable and still worthy of investment.'⁴⁹¹

Orphans were without both or one parent; destitute children were from families who for various reasons were unable to provide for them — both were considered worthy of care and investment. Under the *1867 Neglected and Criminal Children Act*, neglected children were defined as: 'any child found begging wandering the streets with no fixed place of abode or visible means of subsistence, living in a brothel or associating with a reputed thief, prostitute, convicted vagrant or habitual drunkard' or deemed uncontrollable by his parent. Often

⁴⁹¹ Tennant (1989), 46.

however, there was a grey area between the two groups, such as Oamaru's Morrison boys who were encouraged to steal by their Mother to provide for the family.⁴⁹²

Neglected children were kept separate from orphans, and indeed members of the community as a whole. The main focus of Industrial Schools was to educate the child to enable them to become worthwhile and contributing citizens — education was less academic than trade.⁴⁹³ The *1882 Industrial Schools Act* allowed inmates to be fostered out to work on farms and other areas of commerce. It is reasonable to suppose that some children made their way to rural Ashburton, especially during harvest season, however as 'committal was regarded as a disgrace',⁴⁹⁴ there is little reference to these children. In North Otago, however, school records often list the comings and goings of inmates from Caversham in Dunedin.

Those children, who were housed locally, in Oamaru at least, were given a comprehensive education, with applications to the local education committee for free tuition often, but not always, granted. Such was the value placed in education by this Committee that in 1867 they paid for a few of the inmates to attend the High school — an opportunity not afforded to many children from more stable backgrounds. Alongside academic education children were also given religious instruction. This was especially important for Oamaru's Catholic population, which insisted that Catholic children should be educated at the local Catholic school, given instruction by a priest and, if boarded out, must go to a home approved by the

⁴⁹² The father was out of colony and mother was bed ridden. Duncan, the eldest, said his Mother made him get up at 4am to steal wood and coal. The two boys were sent to the Industrial School until they were 15. The judge said it was 'no use to send the boys back home to pilfer for the mother'. While this may have been true no mention was made about how the woman coped. *North Otago Times*, 26 November 1884. By 12 October 1886 Mrs Morrison's two younger children were brought up before the court for stealing coal. The policeman in charge of the case said that before Donald and his brother were arrested two others had passed through the Industrial School and now the youngest two children were destined for the same institution.

⁴⁹³ Thomson, 30.

⁴⁹⁴ Beagle, 2.

local priest. In 18 December 1877 the priest even threatened to stop his congregation supporting the Society if his demands were not met.⁴⁹⁵

Canterbury's destitute children were housed in the old Christchurch hospital in 1868. This included children from Ashburton, although in 1887 a few children were brought from Christchurch to Ashburton by the Catholic Sisters of Mercy and housed in their boarding establishment associated with the Parish School. These children, who were funded by the Charitable Aid Board at 7/- a week, were transferred to the Nelson Orphanage in 1892.⁴⁹⁶ This action was largely forced on the sisters because many parents objected to having their children associating with the orphans and withdrew their own children from the school.⁴⁹⁷

Canterbury decided that alongside an Industrial school, they also required a penitentiary. Burnham was opened in 1873, originally as an Industrial School, but later it became a reformatory. It maintained both criminal and 'backward' boys.⁴⁹⁸ The 1907 Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives stated that the boys were sent to the school 'due to their criminal or vicious tendencies.'⁴⁹⁹ Otago's children were housed in a number of religious orphanages as well as the Industrial School, opened in 1869 as part of the Caversham Benevolent Society's home. While most of Oamaru's delinquent children were shipped off to Dunedin, other children remained in town. Until 1881, those who did not stay with family, were housed in the immigration barracks, which jostling as they were amongst young women, old men and the ill, may not have been preferable to the Industrial School.

⁴⁹⁵ *North Otago Times*.

⁴⁹⁶ While some Catholic girls resided in Nelson it was the destination for most of the South Island's male orphans and abandoned children. Although Bishop Moran endeavoured to establish an Industrial School for Catholic boys in Oamaru for Otago in 1888 it was declined by the Government.

⁴⁹⁷ Michael Hanrahan, *The Warm Wind of Faith* (Ashburton: Holy Name Parish Centennial Committee, 1981, 21.

⁴⁹⁸ Beagle, 87.

⁴⁹⁹ Extract from the thirtieth annual report of the Minister of Education, E 3, p. 1.

At the North Otago Benevolent Society meeting of 8 February 1881 it was resolved that ‘the principle of admitting children to the Home for payment is a wrong one, and that the children now there be removed as soon as possible.’⁵⁰⁰ If children did not go to the Industrial school, they would be ‘fostered’ out — the local Society paying local women, often in receipt of aid themselves, to look after the children of others.⁵⁰¹ The other option was that families who were struggling to care for their children would be helped — either by a cash benefit, outrelief — such as coal, food or clothing, or in Oamaru’s case providing the family with cheap lodgings in the immigrant cottages. Children came into care for a variety of reasons such as death, illness or disappearance of a parent, illegitimacy, or poverty. Children could also be brought to attention by the parents themselves or the justice system.

While Ashburton offered outrelief, it had no third option — children were either supported by money administered by the Charitable Aid Board or they were sent to Burnham. Ashburton paid their contributions and used the Industrial school and orphanage, but Oamaru was always analysing costs to discern whether sending children outside was more cost effective than establishing their own institutions. Payment of non-local care was a major cause of concern for Oamaru. It transpired that the cost of erecting an Industrial school and orphanage, utilising a number of poor local women to take these children in and bring them up, or using the immigration cottages was much more than the current contributions to Otago.⁵⁰² For example, in 1877⁵⁰³ Mr Johnstone requested that the local Society take on the responsibility of his nine children, after his wife died. The chair of the Otepopo Committee

⁵⁰⁰ However by the end of the year there were still 6 children listed as inmates. Under the 1886 Charitable Amendment Act, the practice of sending children who were orphans or destitute to institutions fell out of favour. Captain Fraser of the Legislative Council, for example, disapproved of the large institutions where children were brought up as automatons and under no family influence, *Beagle*, 34.

⁵⁰¹ For example, Mrs Young was told to send her children to the Industrial Home immediately or if she promises to pay 7s 6d per week to the Society, Mrs Sullivan will look after her children. As long as she pays, the Society will take charge of the children. Minutes North Otago Benevolent Society, 6 April 1880.

⁵⁰² The matter was brought up again in 1889 (11 January) when a widower requested that the Dunedin take his five children, and also 1890 when the amount payable to the Industrial School reached £119 17s per quarter.

⁵⁰³ *North Otago Times*, 11 September.

of the North Otago Benevolent Society had to personally take on the role of guarantor that he would pay the 25s per week (plus bedding) for their upkeep. A local subscription raised £60 for this commitment, however it was discovered that sending the entire family to the Industrial school would be much cheaper.

In 1886 the Chairman of the Benevolent Society said ‘he thought it very bad policy to allow these children to be sent out of Oamaru. The money for relief of these children [, he said,] should be spent in the midst of those contributing to their relief. If the children were kept in town, the Board would have an opportunity of ascertaining the position of the parents.’⁵⁰⁴ Research has indicated that sometimes parents would apply to the court to commit their children to the Industrial School and the Oamaru Society (sic) would have to fit the bill of up to 8 shilling per child per week. In 1889, the Premier passed a Bill that no child should be sent to Industrial School before the Board was notified.⁵⁰⁵

Of course, some parents did not wish to abandon or give up their children, but they did require assistance. Both Oamaru and Ashburton provided relief to families in need — especially those who had lost the breadwinner by illness, death or desertion. One of the major issues facing Victorian society, from both a social and financial aspect was wife desertion.⁵⁰⁶ A nation-wide problem, it was serious in both the provinces under study with significant gold strikes enticing men away from their responsibilities. While illness and death left women and children without support as much as abandonment, desertion was seen as “less worthy” of the community’s funds. Although those left to care for the families were antagonistic towards the husband, some negativity also was directed to the wives. In 1852 James Fitzgerald — superintendent of Canterbury, among other things — advised women, via

⁵⁰⁴ *North Otago Times*, 12 June

⁵⁰⁵ See *North Otago Times*, 11 December 1888.

⁵⁰⁶ For example, in the 1883 annual report the North Otago Benevolent Society (printed in the *North Otago Times*, 7 March, 1883) stated that they had to assist 79 wives and 276 children.

the *Lyttelton Times* that ‘they must take the consequences and they have no right to expect anything from [the Association] or any other sources.’⁵⁰⁷ This rather hard hearted view was echoed by the North Otago Benevolent Society who blamed the problem on ‘haphazard marriages ... the union of foolish men with silly women.’⁵⁰⁸

While both provinces paid the women support, they did not do so willingly. Mimicking the bastardy courts in England which chased purported fathers of illegitimate children, both Canterbury and Otago spent rather large sums of money to track down ‘cowardly’ husbands.⁵⁰⁹ These husbands were required to recompense the boards, but in many instances wives were sent back to their husbands to curtail the payment altogether. This may have been cost effective, but one wonders what social and emotional costs it brought. For example, James Wood was brought before the Oamaru court for desertion. His wife Annie did not want him back, although James was willing to take her back so, disregarding Mrs Wood’s wishes, the judge pointed out the contact she had made to live with him and stated his offer was worth considering. Three days later at a retrial, another judge said it was a case of heartless desertion and made James pay 10s a week or be sentenced to three months hard labour.⁵¹⁰

Attending court cases where women sued errant husbands for maintenance,⁵¹¹ or those who did not fully support their wives and children were part of the brief of secretaries of

⁵⁰⁷ Norris, 34. By 1872, however the Charitable Aid Board commented that many of those they were helping were indeed deserted wives.

⁵⁰⁸ *North Otago Times*, 7 March 1883, apart from the financial cost, ‘the prevalence of unions of this kind has been held to account in some degree for the prevalence of colonial larrikinism.’

⁵⁰⁹ For example the Benevolent Society reported (via the *North Otago Times*, 4 May 1886 that the police had located the missing Mr Burling in Tasmania on the way to Cape Colony.

⁵¹⁰ See *North Otago Times*, 2 March, 1895. Similarly, when he was found in Timaru, Mrs Cowley and her family were transported to her husband there. One wonders what happened in this situation, see *North Otago Times*, 3 April, 1882.

⁵¹¹ *Ashburton Guardian*, 23 March 1888.

benevolent societies.⁵¹² Much of this work was encouraged by the financial interests of the society or committee rather than philanthropic concern; in fact often sometimes their actions appear rather harsh. For example, Henry Neal was brought back to Ashburton from Christchurch and pleaded not guilty to desertion. His wife Annie and seven children were ‘entirely destitute’ and relied on the Benevolent Society for support. However the Society stopped the relief, insisting she press charges against her husband. She did this, not to get him back she said, but to get her rations reinstated. When the Police said Neal ‘had frequently thrown the support of his wife and children on charity while he loafed about drinking’, the Board refused to continue support as Neal was ‘perfectly able’ to support his family.⁵¹³

Apart from husband and wives, maintenance orders were also made against children and others deemed responsible for their needy family members. For example, in a letter to the secretary of the Ashburton Charitable Aid Board,⁵¹⁴ the Chairman said that when people receiving relief have family able to assist they are compelled under section 4 of the *Destitute Persons Act 1877* to give information or the benefit will be stopped.⁵¹⁵ Showing the determination of boards to find next of kin to offset at least some of the costs of providing aid on 7 March, 1887 it was reported in the *North Otago Times* that Mr Lawrence was given a cottage at 5 shillings a week. It was noted that his brother in Adelaide had paid something for his brother’s keep. Although it did not cover all the costs, the effort was appreciated.

While it made economic sense for the community at large that family members pay something towards the upkeep of their needy relations, it placed a great deal of strain on

⁵¹² In the mid-1890s, 60% of the Wellington magistrate’s court business involved deserted wives seeking maintenance and protection orders. <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/divorce-and-separation/page-4>

⁵¹³ *Ashburton Guardian*, 23 August, 1888.

⁵¹⁴ 6 January, 1890.

⁵¹⁵ Mrs Quigley was struck off list, as it was discovered she had a son who could support her. She was told that if she applied again she would be refused aid until she gave her sons address. Minutes North Otago Benevolent Society, 7 August, 1882.

everyone, especially if the needy family member was difficult to deal with. The *Ashburton Guardian*⁵¹⁶ recounted that Samuel Finlay, aged 78 tried to kill himself in Spreydon, after he applied to the Christchurch Charitable Aid Board for immediate aid but was refused. He had arrived from Ashburton with a few pounds so his pleas were not thought urgent. It was stated that he had a daughter in Christchurch and a son in Ashburton; but he had been living with a woman in receipt of aid. Even though the statement said his family were very poor and he was 'given to drink', the Christchurch Board intended to ask the son for some payments. Samuel Finlay junior wrote to the Board (and his letter was printed in the *Ashburton Guardian*) stating that although he was happy to have his father live with him 'and take what is going',⁵¹⁷ he refused to give him money as he would just drink it. He added that his father moved to Christchurch and found lodging with a man who supported him even when he was out of work. Due to his drinking, however, he ended up living in a hovel, with only a horse blanket for warmth. Interestingly, Samuel senior did not claim support from his family, but wanted permanent residency in the Old Men's Home in Ashburton. It is unlikely he received this aid, as members of the Board thought he was 'a strong healthy looking man',⁵¹⁸ who could find work.⁵¹⁹

There are many instances where people moved from their normal place of residence and just as many reasons why they would do it. As with Mr Finlay, they may have simply wanted a change of scene, others looked for work, or moved with their spouse. Unlike Scotland and England where there were settlement laws, people in New Zealand were free to move looking for advancement. Should they fall upon hard times however, charitable aid boards were loathed to support strangers or those who had given little to their community.

⁵¹⁶ See *Ashburton Guardian*, 7th, 10th and 24 January, 1893.

⁵¹⁷ *Ashburton Guardian*, 24 January, 1893

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ Samuel senior was buried by his son so probably he returned to the family.

Boards such as Oamaru and Ashburton were keen to move those strangers to other communities — or at least obtain funding from them. Other boards were usually approached for recompense when the individual was hospitalised. Many more people and families were transferred to other towns, sometimes even different countries, where they would be forced to rely on the charity of family members and whatever other aid they could find. While the ‘expelling’ board sometimes paid rather large sums to move the people on, it was considered that a single payment was more economic than providing long term relief. Such undertakings took much organisation and often it was not straightforward. Family members needed to be located and contacted and fares paid. The North Otago Benevolent Society sent a number of individuals and families throughout New Zealand and even overseas. While Australia was popular so too was America and England (effectively sending people back Home). For example, on 6 August, 1888 the secretary was told to wait on the Captain of the *Hauroto* to see if a free passage for John Dunlop to Sydney could be found. On 2 June, 1884 investigations were begun to see how to get deserted wife Mrs Hewatson to San Francisco, but as her husband returned in February, the inquiries ceased.

While in some cases it could be just a matter of saving local money, such acts were often charitable in the philanthropic sense as well. The best example of this is Mr McLeod. In 1876 the McLeod family, immigrants from Scotland, came up to Oamaru. The father, suffering from TB was too ill to work and had been hospitalised in Dunedin. He was admitted in Oamaru’s Hospital as soon as he arrived. A subscription was raised to send him to Melbourne to receive treatment for his illness. He returned to Oamaru, incurable. The family were in straitened circumstances, relying on the wages of the eldest son. Although they were relative newcomers the entire community supported them; the Benevolent Society gave the family 15s per week and free accommodation in a cottage. The Mayor also

requested assistance from the central and provincial governments.⁵²⁰ With government help,⁵²¹ and funds raised by the community — Mr McLeod was sent back to Scotland (there was no reference to his family returning with him). The fare, costing £54, was mitigated somewhat by the fact that he travelled via the Red Sea not the more expensive Cape Horn route.⁵²²

Not all cases went as smoothly as Mr McLeod. Probably the most infamous case concerned James Allen and shows why societies such as the North Otago Benevolent Society needed to be circumspect about spending their citizens' money. Allen had been an inmate of the Old Men's Home but his habits and morals made him unsuitable as a long term resident. He had family but they were too removed to be made to care for him under the Destitute Persons Act. He refused to work, but he told the Society that he was a planter and could support himself if he could get to Fiji. 'Very naturally and very properly' the Society sent him there, so he could earn his own living. His fare to Suva was paid, and he was provided with a comfortable outfit of respectable clothing and £3. Just as he was to leave he changed his mind, but was persuaded to go. On his arrival in Fiji he did nothing but drink. The authorities of Suva looked upon him as a 'helpless pauper sent to their shores in a spirit of calculating selfishness and inhumanity.'⁵²³ This was due in part to his statement which was printed in a number of New Zealand, as well as Fijian, newspapers, which stated he was shipped to Fiji to make rum.⁵²⁴ The Suva authorities paid for Allan's return to New Zealand and after arriving in Dunedin, tramped back to Oamaru. The Old Men's Home would not take him back, so he went to the Police and declared himself a vagrant, and after being

⁵²⁰ 4 September, 1876.

⁵²¹ The Benevolent Society stated that they had 'been established for the relief of distress among the resident population, and it seem unfair that any local organisation should be made to bear the brunt of the importation, by the Immigration Department, of persons in an unfit condition for work.' 'Benevolent Society', *North Otago Times*, 7 December, 1878.

⁵²² *North Otago Times*, 25 November, 1878.

⁵²³ *North Otago Times*, 28 May, 1882.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

imprisoned for the statutory 3 months, was again placed on the books of the Benevolent Society. At the 5 June meeting the Committee approved of the actions of the visiting committee by giving him temporary accommodation in one of the cottages, confirming that the Old Men's Home was not for life, but to give temporary shelter. The case prompted the secretary to write to the Government suggesting that a central home for the elderly destitute should be established (thereby making it the government's problem).

While long term care was not considered the purpose of the Old Men's Home, the local charitable aid groups sometimes did provide long term relief to a number of its citizens. Outrelief came in a variety of guises: food and necessities were the most common form of assistance. A good indication of what this included can be gleaned from the case against Mr Hill the grocer, who, in 1890, was brought up before the North Otago Benevolent Society for not complying with his tender. It transpired that he did alter the items allotted to beneficiaries, but he did so in order to give them what they wanted or said they needed. They received tea, bread, candles, potatoes, oatmeal, sugar, cream of tartar, soap, butter, tobacco, coffee and cocoa.⁵²⁵ It was obvious that the best quality was not intended to be given to the poor, for example 'Mrs Skerrit would have nothing but the 1s butter when the contract price paid was 4d,'⁵²⁶ and at the meeting of 3 September, a trustee said that the butter was 'unfit for the purpose for which it was sold.'⁵²⁷

Rent relief was also provided, and the case of Oamaru sometimes this included free accommodation in an immigration cottage. People were also given clothing, blankets or coal as their needs were perceived by the members of the Society. Research has shown that this aid was intended to be short term, and visiting committee members made checks on recipients on a monthly basis. There was debate at a meeting of the Benevolent Society in

⁵²⁵ *North Otago Times*, 6 September.

⁵²⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵²⁷ 1890.

1883 concerning the duties of the 'VCs'. While they could summon those in relief to appear before the committee, a motion was forwarded stating that all able-bodied recipients of relief should come to the Committee rather than the visitors go to them. This motion was amended as it was felt that it 'smacked of pauperism',⁵²⁸ and some people worthy of aid would hesitate to apply for it. The mover of the amended motion, Mr Fleming, said 'all relief ought to be done as quietly as possible, the Committee remembering that the applicants were but brothers in distress.'⁵²⁹ The secretary, Mr Spence, added that 'the Committee should avoid as much as possible the appearance of a poor-law board.'⁵³⁰ Emergency aid was also given, in cash or by paying accounts for items and material to make clothes, doctor's assistance and even funerals. Such payments were often required to be paid back, either by the beneficiary or their next of kin.

While the help given was largely intended to be temporary, some people needed long or life time care. These people, often elderly, were required to reimburse, as much as possible, the funds spent on them. In Oamaru at least this meant any property they held either had to be sold or had a lien placed on it.⁵³¹ Even those who had land elsewhere were forced to sell it.⁵³² For the elderly this usually worked well, in other situations it could prove difficult. On the 1 April, 1889 the case of Mrs Darragh (formerly Black) was discussed by the North Otago Benevolent Society. She had a lien on her house in Greta Street, but she said she needed a bigger house as her family were growing. She asked either to be allowed to sell it to buy a new one or have the Society sell it and buy her a new one. After some period of legal investigation it was decided (on 6 May) that the property was absolutely owned by the

⁵²⁸ *North Otago Times*, 2 October, 1883.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵³⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵³¹ For example paralysed Mrs Jamieson offered to sign over her section if she was cared for at the Old People's Home. The society agreed to this and acquired her land. Minutes North Otago Benevolent Society, 4 September, 1882. She only lived another month, with the Society only incurring £3 3s.

⁵³² On 1 October, 1888 the North Otago Benevolent Society discovered that Mrs Wood had land in Victoria, which the secretary was to inquire about and see if it could be sold.

Society, but they allowed her to make additions to it. If they did not have land, people still had to endeavour to either pay back or reduce the amount of relief they received. This was not a voluntary arrangement; recipients of aid were often given little or no choice if they were to continue with the meagre aid they received. For example, Mrs O'Leary was told that her daughter must go into service or her relief would be withdrawn.⁵³³ Mrs Ryan and Mary Ann Mawhinney, both receiving relief, were encouraged to live together to reduce rent and other costs,⁵³⁴ and Mrs Hamilton received a suggestion that she board out her child so she could go into service.⁵³⁵ As they were using money obtained by donation or grants, these managers had a difficult job in assuring the right amount of aid went to those who were deserving, but if there was a means to minimise or eliminate the amount of relief expended then they had a duty to do so. This duty was made more onerous, in North Otago at least, due to the amount of publicity afforded charitable aid. While the minutes of the Benevolent Society do not cover all the period under study, they are reported fully in the local newspapers. Editorial comment and letters to the editor give a comprehensive account of not only what the actions of the Society were, but how the community viewed the committee, their decisions and those who received aid.

Those who received aid were scrutinised both by the Society and the community. Very much like the Scottish method of administering relief, aid in North Otago was very public. Transactions that appeared suspect – such as Mr Hill giving items not listed in grocery orders or when Peter Orr coal merchant was selling coal with stones in it,⁵³⁶ or particulars of cases such as that Mr Todd had to be sober if he was to keep his Benevolent cottage⁵³⁷ were all printed in the newspaper. There was a belief that as public money was used, the public had a

⁵³³ Minutes North Otago Benevolent Society, 2 December, 1889. (This lady was so poor that when her husband died in 1887, she asked the North Otago Benevolent society to bury him)

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

⁵³⁵ North Otago Benevolent Society minutes, 4 April, 1887.

⁵³⁶ 3 September, 1888.

⁵³⁷ 7 January, 1889.

right to know how it was spent. This sentiment is expressed well by the Six Penny Clothing Club who said, in their annual report of 1895: ‘as far as possible, only worthy cases have been assisted, the committee realising that in this work they are stewards of the money given by others to relieve the wants of the deserving poor.’⁵³⁸ In 1897 they restated the same intent: ‘the Committee makes careful inquiry into all cases requiring relief, and as far as possible gives only to the deserving and the destitute, and when the necessity is at an end, withdraws the help, realising that their duty is not to make paupers, only to relieve.’⁵³⁹

As in Scotland, the public policed those who received aid. As Tennant states, this country’s relief system ‘was less trusting and harsher than even the poor law of overseas.’⁵⁴⁰ However community involvement was not always negative — neighbours were as likely to support a needy person as decry their support. For example, in 1889 residents of South Oamaru signed a petition recommending Mrs Maddigan as ‘a fit and proper person to receive aid.’⁵⁴¹ Other requests for aid came from more official sources, such as ministers of religion. For example, Reverend Frank Seth Smith drew the Trustees attention to Mrs Eccles of South Oamaru,⁵⁴² who had to ‘keep her half idiot son, now grown to a man, in food and clothes.’ Her only real income was from taking in washing, which had currently reduced in business.⁵⁴³ Oamaru ministers appeared to take a more active role in bringing cases of distress to the Society notice than their counterparts in Ashburton. No doubt this was facilitated by the fact that most ministers in Oamaru were members of the Committee either full members or ex officio. However, it does strengthen the argument that in Otago, ministers whatever their religion, followed the Scottish tradition of being involved with charity.

⁵³⁸ *North Otago Times*, 19 June 1895.

⁵³⁹ *North Otago Times*, 9 June 1897.

⁵⁴⁰ Tennant (1989), 78.

⁵⁴¹ *North Otago Times*, 6 May. Even with such references after investigations it transpired she had a life interest in a property, so was told she would only receive aid if she agreed to a lien on it.

⁵⁴² South Oamaru, although just on the boundary of the town was the home to many poor families, largely of Free Church or Methodist faith.

⁵⁴³ *North Otago Times*, 3 December, 1889.

The provision of charity relied heavily on the goodwill of the community. Such assistance came via donations from sports and local events and even travelling circuses.⁵⁴⁴ In Oamaru a collection box for the Benevolent Society was placed in the court house (whether this was for donations or to receive fines is unclear). Leftovers from Banquets were often divided between the Hospital and Benevolent Society. Even windfalls — such as a bumper crop of potatoes— were donated to the poor as well as clothes and such luxuries at Christmas as drink and magazines. Professionals such as dentists, and tradesmen such as cobblers, gave their services free of charge.

At the forefront of any charity activity were the ladies. In Oamaru especially, local women formed both the Dorcas and Six Penny Clothing Societies.⁵⁴⁵ The Dorcas Society in Oamaru was established in 1881 and had as its objectives: to make clothes — mainly for women and children, to gather both scraps (to make clothes) and old clothes and to make items for an annual bazaar to raise funds for the Waitaki asylum.⁵⁴⁶ Money also went to assist women in temporary distress as well as to employ poor women to sew for others or to undertake housework – thereby assisting poor women to help each other.⁵⁴⁷ While an editorial of 1886 claims it will help the Benevolent Society as ‘the ladies will probably be abler to ascertain the wants of indigent families than even the kindest disposed members of the trust’,⁵⁴⁸ the ladies themselves appear to believe they were part of the Society. In 1881 the *North Otago Times* stated a ladies branch of the Benevolent Society was advertising that poor women were

⁵⁴⁴ For example in 16 June 1881 Oamaru’s Good Templars held a function to raise funds for the Benevolent Society. Also on 25 March, 1882 the *North Otago Times* stated that recipients of aid received lefts overs of ‘poultry and other luxuries’ from the soiree given at Redcastle. ‘No doubt the recipients felt grateful for the gifts, the like of which have hitherto seldom, if ever, come in their way.’

⁵⁴⁵ In some newspaper reports it was referred to as the Ladies Auxiliary Benevolent Society. At the 8 March 1881 meeting of the Benevolent Society, however, it was stated clearly: ‘this committee does not acknowledge any self-appointed organisation as a branch society, but will be happy to receive the services of ladies to attend such cases as may be considered necessary by this committee.’ *North Otago Times*.

⁵⁴⁶ ‘Ladies Branch Benevolent Society’, *North Otago Times*, 8 February, 1881.

⁵⁴⁷ *North Otago Times*, 17 February, 1881.

⁵⁴⁸ 27 October, 1886.

willing to undertake washing or do knitting and that they would act as broker between the needy and those wanting help (like the female refuge of old).⁵⁴⁹

The Six Penny Clothing Club appears to have been formed officially in 1886, although it does seem to have been going for some time before and references the Dorcas Society as their predecessor. While supplying and making clothing was a feature of the group, fabric was also given to those who could sew for themselves, or others. The group also had a boot department which seems to have provided subsidised footwear. The eponymous name came from the subscription of 6d a month from its members.⁵⁵⁰ While other groups quietly made clothes or dispensed aid, the Six Penny Club publically commented on such things as drinking and wife desertion. They visited homes to see what aid was required and that the right people obtained it.⁵⁵¹ It was still administering aid in 1906 and in 1895 mention of a children's group was made. While Ashburton formed its own Dorcas Society, in 1894, it did not have a Six Penny Clothing Club.

There were many people involved with charity in North Otago. Private charity or organisations such as the Six Penny Clothing group, church groups and local benefactors all assisted the main focus which was the Benevolent Society. The way this Society worked changed little from when it was established. As in Scotland, it was very much a community effort. Membership was attained through subscription and from the membership a committee was elected. The secretary was the only position that was paid (as an honorarium). Each month, members of the committee were elected as visiting committee and it fell upon these men to appraise who needed help and what they should be granted — their recommendations were brought before the committee for ratification. Oamaru was divided into wards for civil

⁵⁴⁹ *North Otago Times*, 8 March, 1881.

⁵⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵¹ 'Nothing is given away without the Committee's being assured that the recipients are deserving, and unable to help themselves.' 10 May, 1893, *North Otago Times*.

administration and the Benevolent Society, as did their counterparts in Scotland, ensured each ward had its own visitor to tend to the problems of their specific area. These men also were available for consultation in circumstances of emergency — although ministers were also often approached. In the rural areas, sub branches were active, with money raised in rural areas often used to assist locals.⁵⁵² Members came from all walks of life, ministers of religion were involved, but the majority were businessmen.

Apart from subscriptions and donations, the main source of income was the pound for pound subsidy provided for by the Government, which was established in 1877 / 1878, originally to help fund hospitals.⁵⁵³ While most committees relied on the subsidy, Dr MacGregor thought it should be dispensed with. He believed it encouraged pauperism, as it fixed in the popular mind, and ‘especially in the minds of the least self-reliant, that they have a right to a living whether they work or not.’ Removing the subsidy will ‘remove the undeserving poor who take up most of the expenditure and enable benevolent societies to spend more on the deserving poor.’⁵⁵⁴

The subsidy was given to Ashburton as well as Oamaru. In many instances the story of Ashburton echoes that of Oamaru. However there is so little recorded about the way charitable aid was administered and perceived that it is hard to portray exactly how similar or not the two communities were. Railway tickets were given to poor and needy in Ashburton to travel to other places within the South Island and there are a few comments that people,

⁵⁵² This seemed to work well with only Hampden (on the edge of the district) not contributing to the organisation. *North Otago Times*, 24 April, 1879.

⁵⁵³ Originally for every pound raised by the organisation, the Government gave 10s. This saw special collections raised for worthy causes as widows and families who lost the breadwinner through accident or death donated to the Benevolent Society so the amount raised could be augmented by the subsidy. However this subsidy did not always get granted. When the citizens of North Otago raised £628.18 3 for the Kaitangata mining disaster they did not get the subsidy as it was a national disaster so the committee had to canvass the community again to obtain money to deal with their local poor. *North Otago Times*, 29 September, 1879.

⁵⁵⁴ ‘Duncan MacGregor, The Problem of Poverty — Report of Hospitals and Charitable Aid Institutions’, *North Otago Times*, 9 September 1895.

who in Oamaru would have been given cottages, were boarded out within the community.⁵⁵⁵ Certainly rations and medical aid were provided to those deemed deserving. One of the officer's duties in Ashburton was to find nurses for sick people and homes for children.⁵⁵⁶

Dr Otley himself, in his study of Ashburton's medical history, notes that little is recorded in the newspapers about the activities concerning charitable aid. The administration of the Ashburton Hospital is mentioned infrequently in the Council minutes (apart from its financial affairs). After the Borough and Council combined in 1882 to take on the role of charitable aid provider, few references are to be found in the minutes or correspondence. Road boards' minutes regularly refer to the amount required by the Board for aid, and the Board itself talks about the government subsidy. Unlike Oamaru, the Ashburton district made no investigations into establishing orphanages or industrial schools. There are also very few discussions about recipients of aid. It seems that Ashburton as a community was content to have the major social issues such as orphans and unruly children dealt with by Christchurch, and less extreme cases of need dealt with as they occurred, by the combined local councils.

Aid in North Otago was very public and had a high level of community involvement, whereas in Ashburton it was a very private, almost invisible, situation where the community handed over the administration of aid to the combined Council, as in England. Ashburton's Council elected an aid subcommittee which investigated cases and administered relief. As the provision and administration of aid was so Council focused, the aid administrator (who obtained funding and dispensed aid) was the County Clerk. Emergency situations were handled either by him or the Mayor. While the Clerk held his position for a number of years, the Mayor often changed, so there was not always consistency of care. Reading the archives

⁵⁵⁵ For example elderly men were boarded out in private homes, the hosts being paid 10s per week. *The Statement of Receipts and Expenditure of the Charitable Institutions under the Control of the Hospital and Charitable Aid Board* mentions amounts paid for destitute children and invalid and infirm persons boarded out.

⁵⁵⁶ From 1875. Christchurch Charitable Aid Board, minute book one (Ch 384 / 7).

of the County Council it appears that small birds that ate their grain crops, building bridges and roads and other items of infrastructure were more important than the welfare of some of their citizens. Discussions about aid centred on the large amount the Council had to contribute to regional wide activities and the small 'return' they received.

Ashburton began to administer its own aid in 1882, but this was limited to hospital based aid; other forms of aid (industrial schools, aged care, etc.) continued to be administered centrally by the Canterbury Charitable Aid Board. Gaining control of its own aid provision and administration so late, Ashburton appeared to struggle to really come to grips with what it was meant to do with the poor and needy in their community. Their administration was through a combined board made up of councillors of the Borough and County. Some funding came from donations,⁵⁵⁷ as in Oamaru, but otherwise it was composed mostly from rates.

To fund the various activities of the area, the Borough and County stuck rates based on rateable land values; for the Ashburton Borough this was relatively straightforward. For the County, however, it was complicated as each riding was administered by a Road Board which called rates and gave a portion to the County. Rateable land value was also used by the Canterbury Charitable Aid Board to determine how much each contributing authority had to pay as an annual 'contribution'. As Ashburton was so large and wealthy, its share often outweighed the other authorities.⁵⁵⁸ This form of taxation was often remarked on as being unfair, as those that rented paid no rates and some large landowners paid very little.

⁵⁵⁷ Although donations of food and goods were proffered, especially to the Hospital and Old Men's Home, actual monetary donations were less forthcoming. Dr MacGregor's report on the Ashburton Hospital (recorded in the *Ashburton Guardian*, 21 July, 1888) stated that the amount of donations to the Ashburton Hospital (at only £1) was the smallest in the country. This was largely because as people were already funding the hospital via their rates, they did not wish, or saw no reason, to pay extra.

⁵⁵⁸ The 1885 Board comprised Selwyn, Ashburton, Amuri, Cheviot, Kaikoura, and Akaroa districts and the boroughs of Akaroa, Christchurch, Kaiapoi, Linwood, Lyttelton, New Brighton, Rangiora, St. Albans, Sumner, Sydenham, and Woolston. Essentially Ashburton was subsidising poor districts such as Sydenham and Woolston due to the introduction of the property tax in 1879. This saw the improved value of the land taxed rather than the short-lived Land Tax where it was based on the unimproved value.



Figure 7: Collecting for the Hospital and Charitable Aid, Ashburton Museum, 04.2004.0067v

While the Canterbury Charitable Aid Board provided money for the Old Men's Home, the only other revenue Ashburton obtained was via the Government's pound for pound subsidy. Large landowners, especially those in the Mount Hutt riding, some distance away from Ashburton itself, complained about the amount they were required to provide with little access to, or need, for relief. That they had to pay at all was an issue,⁵⁵⁹ that their money went to Christchurch was not accepted at all.

For Ashburton, acquiring autonomy over their charitable aid was long-coming and not without a period of settling in. As with the Hospital before, people often travelled to

⁵⁵⁹ Mount Hutt Road Board made two attempts to separate from the Ashburton District in 1911 and 1920, although, by reading minutes and correspondence of the Board a hunger for independence had been felt much earlier

Christchurch looking for medical care, employment or aid with the bill for their care being sent to Ashburton.⁵⁶⁰ Establishing an effective form of administration took time. The area was just coming to terms with their financial and social freedom when a major policy change occurred, with the introduction of the *Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act 1885* and its 1886 amendment. Tennant states ‘the Act was in effect a colonial version of the Poor Law minus the right to relief. In practice it was a mean and limited form of public assistance’,⁵⁶¹ and one that more resembled the aid offered in Scotland than that which occurred in England. Discussion of these two acts is beyond the scope of this work, however what is pertinent is how the Act was greeted and administered in the two areas of interest. For both communities it brought disappointment and confusion. Areas of simmering discontent began to openly erupt, leaving the recipients of aid once freely given now having to run a gantlet of complex rules and administrative hoops.

For Ashburton, which had only recently been released from the financial inequalities of supporting most of Canterbury’s poor, the Acts were a bitter blow. It was forced to re-join Canterbury in a new united Charitable Aid Board entitled The Ashburton and North Canterbury Charitable Aid Board.⁵⁶² Although the Government did not state why they chose this option, (certainly the local Members of Parliament lobbied for a separate district) it would appear that it was because the Old Men’s Home (located in Ashburton) was run by the Canterbury Board. The first meeting of the new Board took place on the 6 November 1885. At the second meeting a motion was put that the Board be divided, with Canterbury and Ashburton becoming separate entities, but was lost 7–10. While the Ashburton District paid

⁵⁶⁰ Certainly the minute books of both councils refer to advertisements in newspapers and letters to ratepayers imploring them not to go to Christchurch for assistance.

⁵⁶¹ Tennant (2007), 2

⁵⁶² While it may be united, the Christchurch members even complained that Ashburton came first in the appellation and frequently referred to it as The United or North Canterbury Board.

more than its fair share to the United Board⁵⁶³ it was allotted very few votes.⁵⁶⁴ Distance further reduced their voice. They were unable to attend the first meeting due to the letter advising of the meeting only arriving the day before, plus the two men chosen to act as representatives had to pay their own expenses to get there.⁵⁶⁵ Repeatedly, Ashburton appealed to the Government to allow them to separate from the North Canterbury Board, without success. To add to the disappointment of the district as a whole, the County had an extra displeasure in that the 1885 Act had constituted it and the Borough as a single entity for the purposes of administering charity, and placed the responsibility on the shoulders of the Borough. Clearly this was unfair if only from a financial perspective. The County minutes of 4 July 1896 show that the County paid £1187.14.6 towards aid and the Borough only £107.18.4. Thus the Ashburton district was back to where it had begun, with a Hospital run by the local authorities⁵⁶⁶ and relief, centred on the Old Men's Home, administered by a combined Board focused on Christchurch. This situation, never acceptable to Ashburton, was tempered only a little by the establishment of an Ashburton Committee which oversaw the administration of aid in the district as well as the Home. Although it had local men as members, it rarely had an Ashburton chair.

While the Mayor of Ashburton Borough and his representative sat on the Charitable Aid Board there was little opportunity for them to assist local people immediately. For example in a letter to the *Ashburton Guardian* 'Humanitarian' stated that difficulty getting into the Home means locals at least are not seeking work. An elderly man, aged 74, obtained work as

⁵⁶³ In its annual 1896 balance sheet the United Board stated it paid out £692.12 for 136 Ashburton people, resulting in a perceived overpayment of £596.17.10.

⁵⁶⁴ There were 17 authorities represented on the Board and Ashburton would at best only get two votes.

⁵⁶⁵ In fact their letter of complaint was the very first received by the newly established board. United Ashburton and North Canterbury Charitable Aid Board minute book one (Ch 384 / 7).

⁵⁶⁶ The Hospital was still managed by the local councils – with three members from the County and two from the Borough. This arrangement ceased in March 1910. There does appear to be Hospital Management Committee as well as a Hospital Board at least until 1899.

a cook, ‘but sickness and infirmity overtook him’⁵⁶⁷ and he was taken to the Christchurch Hospital. On release he returned to Ashburton, but he was unable to obtain employment, so he applied for a room at the Home. He went to the Mayor but he was told that he had no authority to admit anyone. The old man is now wandering about on the riverbed. The article asked is it right that the Mayor has no power to admit deserving men into the Home?

On a number of occasions, the Mayor was warned that while he was able, as member of the United Charitable Aid Board, to make payments and decisions concerning aid of ‘imperative necessity, and to action cases of extreme urgency’⁵⁶⁸ within his area, these cases would be considered at meetings of the Board and if they were not agreed to he would not be recompensed. For example, the Mayor, David Thomas purchased clothes and necessities for William Brown and his family who lost everything in a house fire. When the Board met on 8 October 1890, they refused his accounts.⁵⁶⁹ Thomas did manage to get them to change their minds eventually, however.⁵⁷⁰ With support from the authorised channel of aid restricted, no real alternative — official or otherwise was established in Ashburton. The Police often ‘arrested’ the unemployed or elderly — holding them in their cells until aid could be found. In this way, they could be at least fed and given shelter.

Examples of how the system of administering aid in Ashburton, from Christchurch did not work are abundant. Three are sufficient: Stanley Mumford Evans, arrived in New Zealand looking for a new life, but after 15 months he had no work and after wandering about came to Ashburton. He appealed to the police to place him in goal as a vagrant, as he was starving

⁵⁶⁷ Letters to the Editor, “Poor Law Administration”, *Ashburton Guardian*, 19 April, 1893.

⁵⁶⁸ Ashburton Borough Council letter book, 2 February, 1891. Urgency and necessity were open to interpretation. Mainwaring (the Ashburton County Clerk / Home Committee secretary) had issued Mrs Haskin and her child with rations. The Board, at their 4 February 1886 meeting however stated that she is a strong woman, 36 years of age and there are many cases more deserving of relief”. The Board ordered that the rations must be stopped.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ashburton Guardian* 9 October, 1890.

⁵⁷⁰ *Ashburton Guardian* 20 November 1890.

and ‘had lost heart and was despairing.’⁵⁷¹ He was arrested but the police appealed to the community (and even went to Christchurch to plead) on his behalf to find work, lodging and employment. The community rallied and he was released. The *Guardian* of 26 August 1897 commented that the Board would not give aid to an able bodied man, but by the time the Board had been consulted and a situation found, the man may have been dead, as he ‘was in a fair way to die of starvation.’⁵⁷² This shows how the bureaucratic invisible form of administering aid, favoured by Canterbury, often appeared heartless and cruel. It also highlights how the hands-on, community based system favoured by Otago, was immediate and often more able to assist.

In 1894, an article entitled ‘Clumsy Machinery’, in the *Guardian* told the story of Mrs Alice Scott which they said was a ‘disgrace to the community.’⁵⁷³ Widow Scott was able to survive through taking in washing, topped up with scant rations from the Board. She became ill and was taken to the hospital by the police. She recovered but as she was found to be ‘weakminded’⁵⁷⁴ she was discharged. ‘For a little while she was kept alive by the charity of friends’,⁵⁷⁵ but soon the police heard she was ‘in a helpless condition, scarcely able to dress herself, much less earn her own living’.⁵⁷⁶ She was brought before the court and remanded for a week, so she could be cared for, in Ashburton gaol, and so the police could liaise with the Charitable Aid Board in Christchurch to find a means to care for her. As they did not receive an answer, when the week was over Mrs Scott was sent to Lyttelton Prison, charged as a vagrant. The Ashburton sergeant declared ‘her only crime was that she was alive and helpless.’⁵⁷⁷ She was brought back to Ashburton and was brought before the Justices of the

⁵⁷¹ ‘A painful case’, *Ashburton Guardian*, 26 August, 1897.

⁵⁷² Ibid.

⁵⁷³ ‘Our Charitable Aid System – Clumsy Machine’ *Ashburton Guardian* 17 October, 1894.

⁵⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

Peace. They sent a telegram to the Board, speaking of their ‘cruel and inhuman’⁵⁷⁸ delay and that a woman ‘who through old age and ill health is unable to earn a living, can only be kept alive by being charged as a criminal and sent to gaol is simply monstrous.’⁵⁷⁹

Another nameless example was that of an elderly man, nearly 90, who had been evicted from his residence. He was unable to find lodging or support himself. The Master of the Old Men’s Home took him in although he contravened the rules of the Board in doing so as the old man received a pension. Mr Friedlander, the Ashburton representative, explained to the Board that if he had not been taken in he would have died.⁵⁸⁰

Extensive reading of the local newspapers suggests that the Old Men’s Home was a major cause of dissent amongst Ashburtonians. In 1888 a new Home was built in Woolston, Christchurch, but the infirm, and often most troublesome were still sent to Ashburton. For many, being sent to Ashburton was seen either as a threat or a punishment. For example, George Parker, was charged with lunacy, but on promising to go to the Old Men’s Home, his case was dismissed.⁵⁸¹ Along with cases such as these, some men, used to their freedom and independence, simply rebelled against the strict, even regimental, regime.⁵⁸²

Having little say in who was admitted to the Home, meant that the community was host to men that many deemed undesirable. Tennant explains that ‘Typically male unmarried and friendless ... many of the institutionalised elderly were likely to be of an unruly disposition ... lengthy lists of rules and firm discipline were features of the homes well into the twentieth century.’⁵⁸³

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ashburton Guardian*, 13 July, 1899.

⁵⁸¹ Otley, Volume Four, 88.

⁵⁸² Others simply chose to forsake the institutional life to live rough, but free, in the ‘starlight hotel’.

⁵⁸³ Margaret Tennant, “Elderly indigents and Old Men’s Homes 1880 – 1920,” in *New Zealand Journal of History* Vol. 17 No. 1 (1983), 14

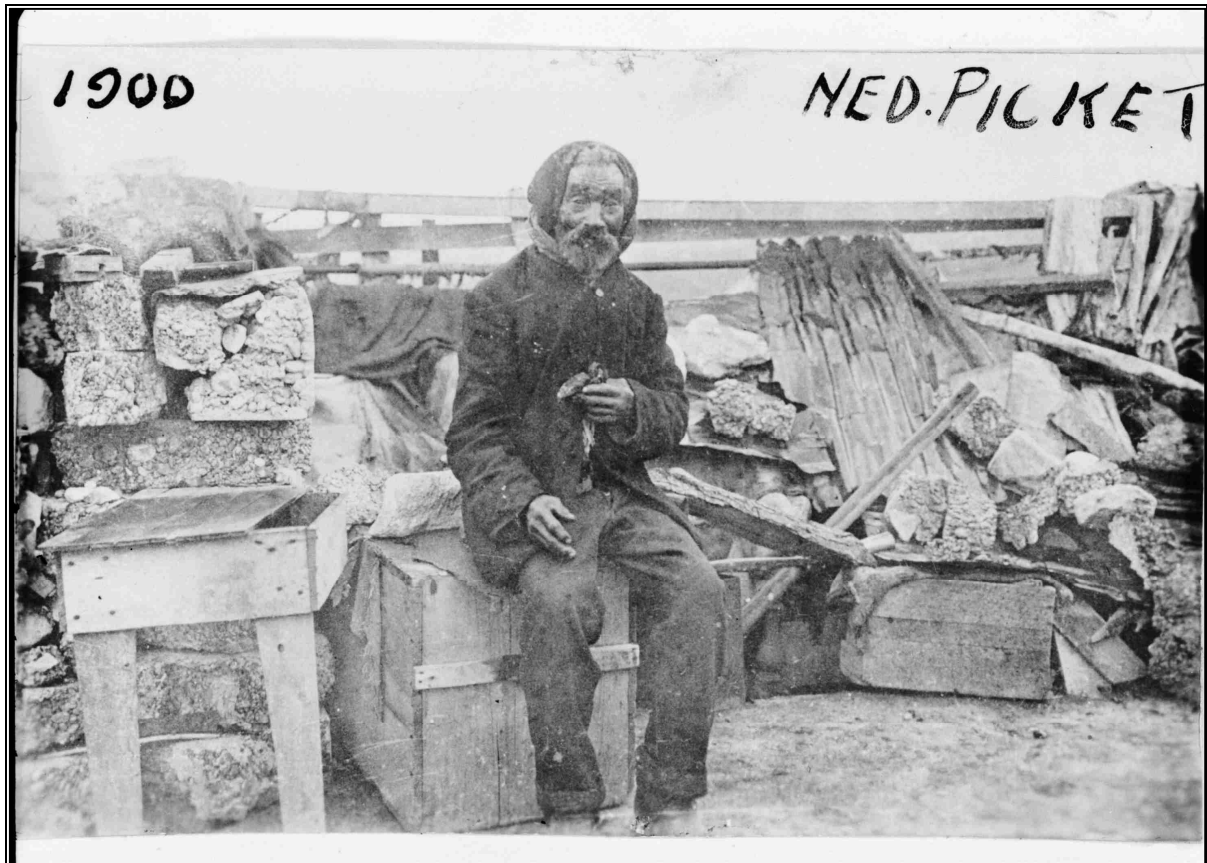


Figure 8: Oamaru's Ned Pickett, who lived on the foreshore within view of the Old Men's Home, and sold fish (often illegally), sits by his burnt out hut. North Otago Museum Archive, WDC 324

**By Laws and regulations to be observed by inmates of the Old Men's Home,
Ashburton⁵⁸⁴**

1. No person shall be admitted as an inmate of this Institution without the product of a written order first obtained from the office of the Charitable Aid Board, Christchurch.
2. Every inmate, or applicant for admission, is required to subscribe to the conditions laid down by the Board as set forth in the form provided for that purpose by which eh assigns absolutely to the Board all his right, title, and interest in any property now in possession, or to which he may hereafter become entitled, in consideration of his maintenance at the Home.
3. All clothing in the possession of any person on admission will become the property of the Board, and, in case of the death of the person, will be used in the ordinary way as clothing for the use of the Institution. Any other personal property in the possession of inmates will be dealt with as the Board may direct.
4. Inmates must not leave the premises without written permission from the officer in charge, and must return within the time specified when such permission is granted. In no case shall the absence extend beyond 9pm, at which hour all inmates must retire to their rooms.
5. All fires and lights shall be extinguished by 9.30 pm, except by special direction of the Medical Officer.
6. Inmates shall rise at 6 am from October 1st to March 31st, and at 7 am from April 1st to September 30th, unless otherwise ordered by the Medical Officer.
7. Inmates must wash themselves regularly before breakfast every morning, and in all other respects pay the utmost attention to cleanliness, both in person and apparel. Any inmate failing to do so will for the first offence forfeit his tobacco for one week.
8. The bedrooms and passages must be swept clean every morning by 7.45 am; the day-rooms by 7.30 am and after every meal. The tables, floors and forms of the day-rooms must be scrubbed with hot water every Tuesday and Saturday. The bedroom floors scrubbed and the chamber utensils cleansed with hot water every Wednesday (a slop pail will be placed at the end of each ward near the bathroom to receive bedroom slops, the pails to be emptied daily by an inmate appointed for that purpose).
9. The closets and spittoons must be cleansed by each inmate in his turn – one week to be the time allotted to each inmate. The closets to be swept out and scrubbed with hot water every Wednesday, and the spittoons every morning. Any inmate refusing to perform these duties will be reported to the Committee
10. The windows of every room must be cleaned every Friday – the inside by the occupants and a man from each ward will be appointed to clean the outside. Dusters will be kept in a bag in the outer passage for that purpose.
11. The bedding will be required to be aired as often as considered necessary by the Master.
12. The hours for meals will be – Breakfast at 8am, dinner at 1 pm, tea at 6pm. All inmates must retain their seats at the tables for half an hour after the bell has been rung for each meal, and no sweeping must be commenced until the expiration of that time.
13. No intoxicating liquor will be allowed on the premises except by order of the Medical Officer.
14. Inmates must no write upon or in any way damage or deface any portion of the buildings or furniture.
15. Smoking is strictly prohibited in every part of the building except the day rooms. Inmates must use the spittoons provided. Any infraction of this rule will subject the offender to forfeit his tobacco for a week.
16. All inmates must carry out the directions of the Master and assist in performing any work that may be required to be done. All gardening and other work shall be performed by as many of the inmates as are not specifically exempted by a certificate in writing from the Medical Officer that they are temporarily or permanently disabled from any or all of such duties.⁵⁸⁵
17. No books, newspapers, or magazines placed in the Institution for the use of the inmates are to be torn or destroyed, and each must be returned to its proper place as soon as read. The daily papers are not to be removed from the day rooms upon any pretence whatever until the day after issue.
18. The Library will be opened on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 2 till 3pm. Any inmate returning a book damaged will be forbidden access to the Library for one week.
19. All inmates in receipt of pensions or remittances, or who may obtain any money by legal process, must hand the amounts over to the Master forthwith, who will transmit the same to the Board and await directions as to its disposal.
20. Any inmates found removing any articles of clothing, food, or other property belonging to the Home

⁵⁸⁴ These rules came into force 15 October 1892. Sourced from Tennant (1989), 205 – 207.

⁵⁸⁵ Many histories of Ashburton make reference to a man who, although he had lost both his legs through frostbite, still dug the Home's garden.

<p>from the premises render themselves liable to prosecution for theft.</p> <p>21. Inmates must conduct themselves in an orderly manner, and act in strict obedience to the Master's orders.</p> <p>22. The Master shall report forthwith to the Committee any inmate who shall use obscene language or become intoxicated, or be guilty of disorderly conduct, or violate any of these regulations; and the Committee may order such inmate to be immediately expelled from the institution.</p> <p>23. Any inmate who shall be guilty of any breach of any of the foregoing By Laws shall forfeit and pay for every such breach such penalty not exceeding in any case the sum of five pounds, as the Justices inflicting the same shall in their discretion think fit.</p>

Figure 9: By Laws and regulations to be observed by inmates of the Old Men's Home, Ashburton, sourced from Tennant (1989), 205 – 207

It was no coincidence that many old men's homes were located away from the majority of citizens and especially hotels. Having such men and with only a poor institution to house them in developed a rather hostile feeling towards not only the old men but Christchurch. Many citizens of Ashburton felt that the Old Men's Home was too close to town. They tried, without success, to get the new building erected in distant Highbank. Despite all the problems however, Ashburton was determined to continue to host the Home. As the 9 March 1893 editorial of *The Ashburton Guardian* stated: 'we protest against metropolitan centralism. Many people still think Christchurch is Canterbury and vice versa, and that beyond a few miles of Christchurch is sheep runs and a semi civilised state.'

RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

ASHBURTON COUNTY HOSPITAL.

1.—Patients admitted into the Hospital shall be accountable for the expenses incurred on their behalf. The charge shall be made by the Master, as directed by the Surgeon, on behalf of the County Council, according to the position and circumstances of the patient..

2.—No patients shall be allowed to go beyond the Hospital grounds without a pass signed by the Surgeon.

3.—All patients shall conduct themselves with propriety. They shall not use profane language, nor gamble, and they shall obey the instructions of the Medical and other officers.

4.—Patients shall not deface or injure any of the Hospital property ; nor spit about the wards or passages.

5.—Smoking or chewing tobacco within doors, is strictly prohibited.

6.—Patients who are sufficiently convalescent shall rise at 7 *a.m.*, and shall, at the discretion of the Surgeon, assist in the wards and about the grounds.

7.—All patients shall be in the wards by 6 *p.m.*, and in bed by 8 *p.m.*, or such hour as may be fixed by the Surgeon in each case.

8.—No spirituous liquors, or provisions of any kind, shall be introduced into the Hospital without the permission of the Surgeon.

9.—Except in emergency cases, all persons must obtain an order for admission from the Surgeon.

10.—No cases deemed unfit for Hospital treatment, in the opinion of the Surgeon, shall be admitted.

11.—Patients will be received in the private wards under special arrangements, and all other patients will be charged according to the scale, as from time to time provided.

12.—Any money, or other valuables, in the possession of a patient, will, at the request of a patient, be taken charge of, otherwise no responsibility will be incurred by the authorities.

13.—Visitors will be admitted on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, between the hours of 11 *a.m.* to 12 *noon*, and 2 to 5 *p.m.*, except under special circumstances, when application must be made to the Surgeon.

14.—Any infringement of any of the foregoing Rules, or any portion of them, will subject the patient to instant dismissal.

Figure 10: Rules of the Ashburton County Hospital, located in Ashburton County Council Committee Minute Book No.1.

RULES & ORDERS

TO BE OBSERVED BY

The Poor of the Parish Workhouse of Aylesbury,
IN THE COUNTY OF BUCKS.

- I. That the Master and Mistress live in the House, and see that the following Rules be observed.
- II. Every Person in health shall rise by six o'Clock the summer half year, and by seven the winter half year, and shall be employed in such labour as their respective age and ability will admit, and commence their work by six o'Clock in the Morning, and work till six o'Clock at Night, from Lady-day to Michaelmas; and from seven o'Clock till dark, from Michaelmas to Lady-day, allowing half an hour for breakfast, one hour for dinner, and half an hour for supper; and any one refusing to work, shall for the first offence go without their next meal, and for the second offence be reported to the Overseers, that they may otherwise be punished.
- III. That all the poor in the House go to bed by eight o'Clock the summer half year, and by seven o'Clock the winter half year, and that all candles be put out by that time.
- IV. That the poor shall have their provisions in a clean and wholesome manner, their breakfast by eight, their dinner at twelve, and their supper at six o'Clock; that no waste be made, nor any provisions carried away; and that Grace shall be said before and after dinner, and none may depart until Grace is said; and their dinner three times a week to be hot meat and vegetables properly cooked.
- V. That the House be swept from top to bottom every morning and cleaned all over once a week, or so often as the Master and Mistress think necessary; and the windows be opened daily.
- VI. That none absent themselves from the House without leave, nor stay beyond the time allowed them, on pain of losing their next meal, or of some other punishment; nor may any one be admitted into the House without leave of the Governor.
- VII. Any of the poor guilty of stealing, selling their provisions or clothing, or of drunkenness, swearing, quarrelling, fighting, or in any other way disturbing the peace of the House, or of being in any way saucy or abusive to the Master or Mistress, shall be punished with the utmost severity of the law.
- VIII. That all in the House who are able, and can be spared from the duties thereof, shall attend Church or some other Place of Worship twice every Sunday; and those who refuse or neglect to attend, or do not return as soon as Service is over, shall go without their next meal, or be punished in some other way, as the Overseers shall think proper.
- IX. No person shall be permitted to bring spirituous liquors into the House, or smoke in any part of the premises, except the hall. Those found transgressing, shall lose their next meal, or be otherwise punished.
- X. Workers shall be allowed 2d. in every shilling they earn; Cook 4d. per week; Doctor's Nurse from 1s. Washerwomen half a pint of ale each per day, and tea in the afternoon.
- XI. Any of the poor acting in disobedience of the orders of the Master or Mistress, or in contempt of these Orders, shall be taken before a Magistrate, and punished as the law directs.
- XII. That these Orders be placed in the hall, dinner-room, or in any other place that the Overseers may direct; and that they be read on a Sunday at dinner-time by the Master or Mistress, so that the poor may not plead ignorance of the same.
- XIII. If any of the poor are found defacing or destroying these Rules, they shall be punished by being fed on bread and water only for two days.

JOHN KERSELEY FOWLER,
JASPER JACKSON,
WILLIAM HOMEMAYER,

} Churchwardens.

ROBERT READ,
JOSEPH SHAW, } Overseers.

27th JANUARY, 1831.

Figure 11: These rules for an English workhouse, dated 1831, have many similarities to those of the Ashburton Home. Author's collection, original source unknown.

Apart from the old men and their accommodation, the financial burden of supplying aid saw higher and higher expectations placed on Ashburton. By 1887 the County had established a special rate of $3/8^{\text{th}}$ of a penny in the pound for charitable aid and general expenses. In 1891 the hospital and charitable aid rate was increased to $1/8^{\text{th}}$ of a pound. In 1896, the editor of the *Guardian* lamented: ‘the time has come when we can no longer boast, as not so long ago we proudly did, that in New Zealand we have neither beggars nor poor rate — we have both now.’⁵⁸⁶

Dissatisfaction with how aid was administered and a number of failed attempts to separate from Canterbury developed a sense of disinterest and frustration within Ashburton. Even with the increase of votes to (in 1891) 3 for the County and 1 for the Borough, it became impossible to find councillors who were willing to take the allotted seats. In 1895, the Government had to appoint local representatives to the Christchurch based Board. Charitable aid in Ashburton, therefore, became focussed on the services of Frederick Mainwaring — clerk of the County and secretary of the Home Committee. He acted as liaison between the people of Ashburton and the Board — often an unenviable task. With little interaction between the Board and the community, misunderstandings could and did occur. The most notable occurred in 1894 when there were allegations of extravagant spending of staff while the poor were left to want,⁵⁸⁷ plus other ‘graver’ matters concerning female applicants for relief. Grace Neill, Dr MacGregor’s assistant, undertook investigations which heard of cases of cruelty from officers of the Board in refusing assistance and its ‘parsimony in dealing with the old, sick and unfortunate.’⁵⁸⁸ While, on the whole the Royal Commission found the

⁵⁸⁶The Old Men’s Home, *Ashburton Guardian*, 4 February 1896.

⁵⁸⁷*Ashburton Guardian*, 21 November, 1894. The case of Widow Scott was one that acted as catalyst.

⁵⁸⁸Ibid.

allegations were not justified,⁵⁸⁹ it gives a good example of how the invisible method of administering aid could be open to such problems.

While lack of interest was an issue for Ashburton, Oamaru almost had the opposite problem, having too many people involved. The 1885 Act saw a better result for Oamaru compared with Ashburton. The Act established the Waitaki Charitable Aid Board, comprising the Boroughs of Hampden and Oamaru as well as the Waitaki County. The Board was composed of the mayors of the Boroughs, chair of the County and their nominees. This organisation was not popularly elected on either a parliamentary or a ratepayer franchise.⁵⁹⁰ As the title of the legislation implies – this Board would administer both the Hospital and charitable aid. This was unacceptable to the hard working and passionate people who had administered the Benevolent Society and Hospital for so many years. The mind-set of the community was that these were two separate institutions with different aims. Citing section 42 of the 1885 Act, both groups set about gaining the necessary 100 subscribers to allow them to remain separate.⁵⁹¹ It was quite a scramble, with many people unsure whether the goal was 100 subscribers or £100. Men canvassed the district to ‘sign up’ people who agreed to support the groups. While the Hospital was first to achieve the desired amount, the Benevolent Society also managed to reach the required quota. Although there were many reasons why people gave to either society, many felt that the existing, hands on, method of management, with elected representatives had worked well. Fortunately, the WCAB did not object to the incorporation of the two groups (as it was able to, under section 44), but the act of incorporation of the Benevolent Society and Hospital Board did not mean that the Government appointed Board went out of existence. Few people felt that this new Board was

⁵⁸⁹ The Inspectors salaries were considered excessive and as for the charges of immorality towards some of those who ask for aid was ‘not proven’. *Ashburton Guardian*, 26 January. 1895.

⁵⁹⁰ Tennant (1989), 28.

⁵⁹¹ The two boards did not amalgamate until 1910 when the Waitaki Hospital and Charitable Aid board was formed. Contrary to the name, it did not manage the hospital, but concerned itself with public health – especially infectious diseases, and also administered the Old People’s Home and provided charitable aid.

an improvement on how aid had been administered in the past. While the Hospital and Benevolent Society still obtained donations and subscriptions, the major funding — from local bodies and the Government — including the pound for pound subsidy, went to the Board. In Oamaru's case at least, the Board held the purse strings and dispensed funds, on request, to the two societies that actually administered the aid. This resulted in the groups constantly being short of funds, while the Board, which did very little, having money sitting idle. Not only did this place financial stress on the two groups, but for the first time they were actively competing for funds.

The 1885 Act also reduced the need for voluntary financial support from the community as it enabled boards to request payments from the local authorities. Councils could agree to pay from the general fund or strike a special rate, which occurred in Oamaru in 1886. While the Board obtained a pound for pound subsidy — which meant that the amounts requested from the local authorities was relatively small, people believed that as they were paying for charitable aid in their rates they did not need to donate. Also, due to the rates being levied yet again on rateable value — the large rural land owners paid very little, compared to urban dwellers, which many, especially the Benevolent Society, felt was unfair.

Their additional concern was the *Local Bodies Contractors Act* which was passed in 1885, but which was first muted as part of 1881 draft Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act. This Act, which the *North Otago Times* described as a 'peculiarly inconveniencing, if not altogether obnoxious measure',⁵⁹² stated that those who had dealings with the society on a business level were unable to hold office. This reduced the number of people who could stand for office in the two groups. As for the Board, the management was given over largely to members of the local Councils — which was the norm for English-based Canterbury but a new idea for Oamaru, so new in fact that there was little support from councillors to become

⁵⁹² 10 October, 1885.

Board members. At the 16 October 1885 Borough meeting one man said he had not the time, another said it was absurd that something that once was borne easily on the shoulders of many should be now given to a few, largely disinterested, men.⁵⁹³

As the editor of the *North Otago Times* stated:

to appoint a county council en bloc to be the major part of a Charitable Aid Board is to ignore the principle that all men are not actuated by the same motives. It was the height of absurdity in the Legislature to presume that men who were elected for other purposes and work would, when appointed *nolens volens* to supervise the distribution of charitable aid, take kindly or zealously to such duties. Such a body as the Charitable Aid Board, with the onerous and peculiar duties attached to it, should be an elected body, and a seat upon the Board should be made an object of ambition.⁵⁹⁴

Due to this lack of enthusiasm, the secretary had difficulty in calling meetings. In 1889, seven attempts were made before a quorum was attained.⁵⁹⁵ This brought strain on the Hospital and Benevolent Society which required funds to keep going, the poor and needy and those who waited for decisions on such matters as admission to industrial schools, as well as those who were owed money — such as suppliers, and other boards. Despite all this lack of organisation in the ‘parent’ body the Hospital and Benevolent Societies continued to provide relief and assistance and keep their respective institutions running.

While run on similar lines as Ashburton, Oamaru’s Old Men’s Home did not cause the same amount of concern. What did become an issue was the care of incurables. First discussed in 1881, by the late 1890s the situation had become pressing. While the Hospital accepted that it had a responsibility to care for the ill, its rules still stated it could not accept someone who was terminally ill, nor would they risk the health of their patients by admitting someone who had a contagious disease (they did, however later erect a fever / isolation ward). The

⁵⁹³ The Borough Council and the District Board, *North Otago Times*, 16 October, 1885.

⁵⁹⁴ *North Otago Times*, 25 March, 1890.

⁵⁹⁵ At the first meeting of the Board 6 November 1885 the Chairman said it would be necessary to meet only about three times a year if the local bodies were established as separate institutions. Mr Sutherland said if the local bodies intended to become separate institutions, it would reduce the Board’s functions to next to nothing.

Hospital pushed for such ‘hopeless’ cases to go to the Old Men’s Home. The Master and supporters of the Home in reply questioned why contagious people should be allowed to infect the elderly. Besides, the staff were limited in number and skills to care for such cases. As it was, they enlisted the help of the elderly to care for their fellow inmates as well as occasionally act as night nurses at the Hospital. Finally a compromise was met with a special wing added to the Old Peoples Home. This project, funded largely by donations and subsidy was the project chosen to commemorate Queen Victoria’s Jubilee.⁵⁹⁶ ‘Affection for the Queen could elicit donations where routine giving for the poor was less forthcoming.’⁵⁹⁷

Voluntary giving in the form of donations and subscriptions continued to be given to the Benevolent Society (whose members were now called trustees), although at a lesser rate than they had before the Act was passed. Although the funds were difficult to obtain, largely due to a fall off of support and through the lack of commitment of the Board, there was no immediately specific tax for charitable aid. Once the levy was established however, it formed part of any ever-increasing burden on property owners, and particularly town dwellers for some time. Rural property owners were frequently ‘canvassed’ for subscriptions with threats made that unless they started to support the Hospital and Benevolent Society voluntarily, a levy would be called by the authorities and their compulsory contribution would be large. This was a direct echo from the time of the Poor Laws. The rural sector, however, believed they already supported the poor by giving assistance in the forms of employment and catering for swaggers etc. For them, aid was more practical than a financial commitment. As people like Teschemaker and the Australian and New Zealand Land Company (of Totara) suggested, workers could also be asked to contribute rather than just the landowners.⁵⁹⁸

⁵⁹⁶ 8 May 1897.

⁵⁹⁷ Tennant, (2007), 36.

⁵⁹⁸ From 1881 factories and large business houses in Oamaru were also approached for support.

In a last ditch attempt to forgo taxation, the Hospital and Benevolent Society staged a massive fete at well-known estate Elderslie. Initially a celebration of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee, it grew into a massive fundraiser. The fete was suggested by Mrs Reid of Elderslie, who said 'the proposed fete should be free as the wind and beneficent as the sun that shines.'⁵⁹⁹ It certainly was well supported with stewards comprising members of the Borough Council, Waitaki County Council, Road Boards, Harbour Board, Charitable Aid Board, trustees of the Hospital and Benevolent Society, directors of the Caledonian Society, and members of the Northern Agricultural and Pastoral Association. Over 4000 people attended, including the Governor; special trains were provided, with part of the ticket price going to the cause. Those who gathered enjoyed boat racing, entertainments and sham fights put on by the volunteers. In all, over £1000 was added to the institutions' bank balances; however by the middle of 1889, the Board was forced to levy a rate upon the local bodies. By 1897, the Board chairman was bemoaning the fact that once the charitable aid levy was set at 1/20th and now it was as near as possibly 1/12th.⁶⁰⁰ The poor law which both Canterbury and Otago vehemently opposed had arrived.

Even with levies in place there still was need for special funds in times of great distress. As the views on the elderly changed, from a drain on society to noble men who helped to make this colony and so worthy of aid, the views of the unemployed also changed. In the early years being unemployed was seen as the fault of the person involved — surely with all that needed to be done in the colony having no work was an impossibility?

In 1867 the Canterbury provincial government, who at least as early as 1864 employed men to break rocks for road metal or plant potatoes, wrote to the Charitable Aid Officer stating that a number of these men 'appear to look upon the wages given to them in the light of a

⁵⁹⁹ 'Proposed Fete at Elderslie', *North Otago Times*, 3 March 1887.

⁶⁰⁰ *North Otago Times*, 27 March, 1897.

charity, to which they are almost entitled as a right.’⁶⁰¹ To combat this, where previously they were paid by the day they would now be paid by the amount produced.⁶⁰²

Communities were used to the seasonal unemployment, which they usually managed to cover with relief work or short term payments from the Benevolent Society. But by the late 1870s the situation became permanent and more large-scale, especially with the influx of immigrants coming under the Vogel Scheme.⁶⁰³ Work relief now became an important feature of charitable aid. Although Tennant argues that ‘work relief, more than any other form of relief brought in an element of coercion and direction, and that employment of a disagreeable kind would sort out the work-shy from the genuinely unemployed’,⁶⁰⁴ utilising the unemployed sometimes had benefits for the communities. By the 1880s both Oamaru and Ashburton Councils were employing men to do such tasks as road making, planting trees and tidying areas.⁶⁰⁵ Ashburton actually benefitted from being part of a large authority with Ashburton Borough requesting Canterbury unemployed be sent to Mt Somers to assist in the extension of the railway line.⁶⁰⁶

Ashburton, which had been forced to re-join the North Canterbury Board, felt very strongly that money raised in their area should go to their men and their projects. However, as part of a larger group as they were, funds and donations had to go to the United Board which would obtain the pound for pound subsidy and be dispensed where the Board decided the need was greatest. Many Ashburton road boards refused to do this and administered their own aid. By

⁶⁰¹ United Ashburton and North Canterbury Charitable Aid Board, Instructions etc. to the officer administering 6 July, 1867. Archives New Zealand (Christchurch), item R20593205.

⁶⁰² Ibid. Before they were paid 5 shillings a day now they were to be offered 1s 6d per yard or at the most 2s. Interestingly, the stone to be broken was situated outside the Gaol. Stone breaking was reserved for criminals in England and perhaps gives an indication as to how these men were viewed.

⁶⁰³ For example the Ashburton Road Board was employing as many immigrants as required, paying them to fill in ruts in roads. Minutes, 4 August 1867. It is therefore difficult to state whether figures of unemployment were residents or new immigrants arriving without jobs.

⁶⁰⁴ Tennant, (1989), 82.

⁶⁰⁵ For example: Accounts by the South Rakaia Road Board included £99 pounds for digging holes for the plantation and breaking stones. 2 September, 1880.

⁶⁰⁶ Ashburton Borough Council minutes, 1 October, 1879.

1895, the Borough and County of Ashburton combined to establish a ‘Winter Work Fund’, which canvassed for subscribers and contributors in the same way as the North Otago Benevolent Society raised their funds. This fund was suggested by the Anglican minister Rev T A Hamilton.⁶⁰⁷ Of course this supposed that the men applying to the fund were able to work. The *Guardian* talks about men who were neither fully able bodied nor disabled, who were unable to obtain aid of any kind as the Government only paid for work and the Charitable Aid Board thought they could do ‘some’ work.⁶⁰⁸ The United Board’s money would also only be given to work that was supervised by the central CAB board and the men had to be registered with the local labour bureau — the agent in Ashburton being the local policeman.

Possibly this is one of the clearest examples of how the centralised scheme of relief was less humane and efficient than a hands-on, locally based, one. In Ashburton, official works were often degrading and did not benefit the community (as did the Winter Work Fund which Vicar Hamilton stressed should be to improve the town and give satisfaction to the men performing the work). The Labour Bureau took little notice of who the people were that registered. Single men sometimes obtained work while married men with families missed out. Often this was due to the fact that the married men did not register for the works. There were many men with families that would be glad for work, but they ‘bravely knuckled down to the hard times’,⁶⁰⁹ rather than seek aid from the CAB or the Government. As everyone knew everyone, they could get credit from storekeepers until good times returned. Another issue was that the work was often of little benefit to the functioning or beautification of the town. Eventually, the Borough was given the role of administrator for the relief works in the District. While this was better than Christchurch, the unease of town versus country again

⁶⁰⁷ For example St Stephen’s Annual report printed in *Ashburton Guardian*, 24 April 1895, Editorial *Ashburton Guardian*, 13 June 1895 and ‘Winter Work Fund’, *Ashburton Guardian*, 20 June 1895.

⁶⁰⁸ 13 July 1889.

⁶⁰⁹ Letter to the editor “The Unemployed”, *Ashburton Guardian*, 14 June 1894.

reared its head. As the MP for Rangitata stated much of the money and works were centred around the town yet country people were still being asked to provide work or food and lodging.⁶¹⁰

While Ashburton, willingly or not, relied heavily on a central administration to distribute aid, Oamaru did what it could to provide relief to one sector of the community without further burdening the other sector with extra financial stress. In Oamaru, as in Ashburton, it was the winter that brought the largest calls for relief. In 1880 it was said ‘that men were asking for work in return for food and lodgings, without pay: some were living on potatoes, eked out with fish caught in the harbour, some made a precarious livelihood by basketing crayfish at the breakwater to sell in the evenings.’⁶¹¹ Like Ashburton, Oamaru also felt that a long term solution was the responsibility of the Government and not local bodies, although both established relief works, with the Windsor railway line administered by the Government and various works, including portions of the waterworks, managed by the Borough Council.

More immediate relief came from the community itself, in particular an auction of donated goods that lasted three days; the initiative of the Oamaru Benevolent Society in 1881. In 1885 Father Coleman, who had been so active in establishing the Benevolent Society came to the fore again — suggesting a ‘humane and enterprising’⁶¹² scheme. This saw poorer people employed by the ‘well-conditioned members of the Oamaru community’⁶¹³ to do such tasks as washing, making boots or breaking stones. The Free Church minister Dr MacGregor congratulated Coleman on his scheme which worked ‘through the social affections of neighbour to neighbour’⁶¹⁴ (this of course was the main principal of Chalmers’ network of

⁶¹⁰ *North Otago Times*. 12 June, 1889.

⁶¹¹ K.C. McDonald, *White Stone Country: the History of North Otago* (Oamaru: North Otago Centennial Committee, 1962), 182.

⁶¹² 9 May 1885.

⁶¹³ Letter to the Editor, *North Otago Times*, 11 May, 1885.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.* Although Dr MacGregor was concerned that this means of helping would upset the already stressed labour market.

care). While the idea had merit, the majority of relief still came from the local authorities, who were able to get the Government subsidy. The local community however still continued to provide donations and contributions of food and clothing.

Sutch states that ‘the main social reforms that were to come, stemmed from this period of long depression.’⁶¹⁵ However, as much as it was precursor of things to come it also highlighted the way things had been between Otago and Canterbury from the beginning. In Otago, including Oamaru, relief came largely from the local community, managing relief more effectively in terms of cost and community involvement. Oamaru’s Borough and County — divided into wards or ridings — looked after their own and achieved positive outcomes as far as the work done by the people in need, as well as for the community.

Centralised Canterbury had access to far more resources than North Otago, due at least to its size and population, but had difficulty in administering them. Works done were often more penal than rewarding and money had difficulty getting to the people it was meant to assist. Within Ashburton, local money often went out of the area and was for some time administered by a Governmental official. When this changed it was still administered by the Borough, although the majority of money raised came from the rural sector. Road boards — separate entities in their own right, often set up alternative means of providing for their locals and ensuring that the work done benefited the area that was paying for it.

If one examines the way relief, especially unemployment, was managed in Otago and Canterbury from a centralisation versus local perspective, there was a wide gulf between the two provinces. Yet there also were many similarities.

⁶¹⁵ Sutch, (1969), 96.

Chapter Four:

Conclusion

This study has asked the question whether differences in how charitable aid in Scotland and England was administered had any impact on how aid was viewed and administered in Otago and Canterbury. In order to answer this question the methods of administration of aid in Scotland and England were investigated to decide what, if any, differences existed. After ascertaining that there were differences and offering some reasons for this, the thesis turned to exploring the founding of Otago and Canterbury with special focus on the philosophies of the founders and the Associations they led and how aid was managed and perceived. To confirm the finding that the particular home country strongly influenced the management and perception of aid in the provinces under study Oamaru and Ashburton were investigated and used to highlight the differences on a human as well as an administrative level.

Scottish aid was parish based and administered by the community, while the English system was administered by civil authorities. This division may have been due to three factors: the influence of the highland clan system, the sphere of influence of the Church in Scotland and its predominantly rural population. Scotland's highly rural population encouraged community based administration. This neighbour helping (and keeping an eye on) neighbour acted as the ambulance at the top of the cliff — with small problems often being able to be solved before the situation escalated to the point where families in real need were placed in poorhouses. This cluster of care was essential in the Free Church community, which had little financial backing from official sources. England did not have a clan system and embraced industrialisation earlier and more earnestly than its northern neighbour. England

had a long history of providing aid via local authorities, which could be said to be adequate for small villages and towns but often proved inadequate in larger communities due to a lack of intimate involvement of the providers and administrators of aid with the needy members of their community. England in particular was fortunate to have a number of wealthy philanthropists who supplemented state care — even establishing hospitals and homes themselves.

These administrative differences were transported to Canterbury and Otago. While it is the differences that this thesis explored, there were some important similarities, things that only those two provinces had in common. Unlike the rest of New Zealand, they were founded by countries and religious groups in a specific attempt to establish a community in the new colony. They were wealthy, due to gold deposits⁶¹⁶ especially in Otago, as well as successful in agriculture. They were both heavily influenced by Edward Gibbon Wakefield's system of settlement which sought to transplant the successful class structure of England to New Zealand, although Otago and Canterbury did differ in how these theories were put into practice.

In the area of charitable aid there were more similarities. Both provinces provided aid to those in need through similar institutions such as industrial schools and female refuges. However this study shows that there were differences. These differences were based largely around the method of administration and community ownership of the obligation to provide aid, rather than philosophic differences in how those requiring aid were perceived. These differences in how aid was administered are a major factor to consider if one wishes to qualify whether either method was more efficient or effective than the other.

⁶¹⁶ While Otago's gold rushes are well documented, Canterbury too enjoyed massive income from gold — although in the case of Canterbury the gold was transported from the West Coast.

Scotland's administration was transported to Otago. Otago was established by the Free Church shortly after The Disruption, which heavily influenced the small community. Brooking quotes Pember Reeves in describing 'Otago as that plodding, brave, clannish and cantankerous little community.'⁶¹⁷ It was a small, scattered community from a largely homogenous background. It embraced a hands-on system where members of the community took on the responsibility of administering aid.

England's tradition was transferred to Canterbury, where either Church or civic authorities took on the role of administration. Unlike Otago, Canterbury comprised a disparate group of people, who, on the whole accepted (if not believed in) of a society based on the Anglican 'culture' and social order. Although the settlers themselves may have expected change in their own circumstances, many did not envisage new methods of administration. In Canterbury, expectations of the poor that care would be provided struggled to be fulfilled, the administrators had little practical experience dealing with such matters, or such poverty, and there were few men of wealth who could assist financially. The inherited expectation that the 'state' would provide, saw individuals not push for a greater role in administering aid. Added to this was the fact that Christchurch installed itself as capital with the surrounding communities seen almost as vassals, and was a far larger area than any found in England. Charitable aid in Canterbury therefore encouraged a dependence on a large, centralised administration rather than one that was community based.

Employing case studies has enabled closer investigation of the differences between the two methods of administering charitable aid. Oamaru, although part of Otago, preferred to be independent; administering its own aid, but utilising province-wide facilities, such as industrial schools, if it made economic sense. They were able to offer a number of avenues of support due to the existence of not only an immigrant barracks but attendant cottages — so

⁶¹⁷ Brooking, (1997), 131.

more people in a variety of situations could be aided at once. The legacy of care encouraged Oamaru men to put themselves forward for election onto the Benevolent Society and Hospital Board. Whether their interest was based on self-interest (especially considering the number of merchants on the Board) or more philanthropic, those on the committees were focussed on the sole task of providing aid to those who were deserving. That the Otago method was more effective can be assumed by the fact that after 1885, when membership of the Board was chosen by the Government, (thereby becoming more like that of England) the numbers of meetings dropped and aid was administered clumsily.

Ashburton was part of the Canterbury Association's settlement founded in 1850. Christchurch took on the role of parent — administering aid to the infant city, as well the rural hinterland, including Ashburton. Ashburton established its own hospital, but it continued to rely on Christchurch for its charitable aid. Even when the community eventually took over the responsibility of administering its own aid, it did so through the local authorities. Ashburton's provision of relief was largely outrelief with all institutions based in Christchurch except for the Old Men's Home, which was based in Ashburton, but administered by Christchurch.

The pivotal 1885 *Hospital and Charitable Institutions Act*, although making the administration of aid more standardised and central, was also intended to encourage communities to manage their own aid. This is where the difference between the Oamaru and Ashburton communities becomes definite. Ashburton was defined as a separate charitable district but joined with Christchurch to form a United Board. Management of aid was via a government appointed Board, composed mainly of local authorities. Provision of aid became a civic duty that had a strong business focus of maximising returns while minimising cost.

Oamaru was defined as a separate district with its administration composed of both citizens and councillors. However, unlike Ashburton, Oamaru continued to support its Hospital Board and Benevolent Society as separate entities — subscribing the necessary £100 to both groups to ensure they continued to exist. Members of the community were passionate, involved and determined to manage the charitable aid of their community themselves — in a manner that would have made their Scottish forebears proud. Oamaru exemplified the Otago vision of an independent, community involved administration.

Ashburton also followed the Canterbury Association's lead by handing over the administration of aid to local councils. Whether this was because of thrift or philosophy is uncertain. Canterbury had funds, but the lack of local involvement in their distribution meant that there were many instances of destitution which caused the local community frustration and angst. The evidence presented in this thesis indicates that while not uncaring, the way aid was administered in Canterbury meant that aid in Ashburton was less timely less effective, less providing of care and less efficient when compared with Oamaru.

To conclude: the Scottish tradition of community-based care that was brought to Otago encouraged self-sufficiency. That heritage was passed on to later administrators from the founders, so that although the settlement ceased to be a Free Church one, it still retained the same values. Although the province expected people to stand on their own feet, it was ready to assist those that were deemed to have the suitable moral qualifications or could be of later value to the community — such as tradesmen and children. It was a society established with limited funds, an acquaintance with hardship, and a vision to found a successful community. The poor and needy of Otago, as exemplified by Oamaru, were cared for by their fellow citizens who ensured that aid was speedily administered, although publically debated at times.

England's tradition handed over the administration of aid to men preoccupied with other civic matters. They did however have a compulsory poor rate to assist them to care for the poor and needy. Although this system had shortcomings and was under review when New Zealand was settled, in England's smaller villages and towns and when placed in the hands of those with practical experience, it provided adequate relief to many who required it. This tradition transported to Canterbury brought difficulty to those who required aid. The administrators were unaccustomed to dealing with the poor and lacked a steady supply of money to provide widespread and sufficient aid. Although the administration eventually improved and resolved many of the issues, the size of the area the administrators had to manage was so large that the provision of charitable aid in Northern Canterbury and especially remote Ashburton was unsatisfactory.

This thesis concludes that Otago and Canterbury were indeed heavily influenced by their founding countries and far from being the stereotypical tight-pursed and pious community that Scottish / Presbyterians are often painted as, Otago was a more philanthropic and supportive province than Canterbury.

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